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FOREIGN AIDS TO SELF-INTELLIGENCE,  
DESIGNED FOR AN  
HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF ONTOLOGICAL  
SCIENCE,  
PREPARATORY TO A CRITIQUE OF PURE BEING.

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CHAPTER II.

OF GERMAN AND OTHER MYSTICS.

UNDER various forms, the Platonic method of philosophy has re-appeared at different and distant periods of time. It is not without its influence, and we are happy to say, not without a great influence, in the present day; it penetrated with a kind of celestial light the darkness of the middle ages, and divided, in the minds of the early professors of Christianity, the empire of the soul with the doctrines of the gospel itself; and it has always existed in a state of antagonism with the system of Aristotle, as it necessarily must,—the two systems being only the opposite poles of the same science. This accounts for the almost simultaneous origin of the scholastic and mystical schools of theology, having respectively reference (to speak somewhat mystically) to those two classes of metaphysical inquiry, which, if we may believe the oldest author in the world, are nearly as ancient as the creation itself; namely, that which on the one hand permits to eat of the tree of experience, "*which makes fools wise*;" and that which, on the other, prefers to study the Living Principle itself, and through contemplation of the mind in its highest faculty, by means of faith, rise to the perception of eternal realities, and to the possession of intuitive wisdom, of which the depth saith, "it is not in me;" and the sea saith, "it is not in me!" For where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?

"Self-resident, or in the Eternal Mind,  
Its dwelling doth invisibly endure."

The sect of scholastics made, indeed, wild work, in their application of the doctrines of Aristotle misunderstood to the truths of theology.

Their design evidently was not to explore the mental faculties, but to arrange and define the objects of thought. This, however, they endeavoured to do without troubling themselves to acquire a knowledge of those objects, either in the book of revelation or of nature. The problem which they sought to resolve, or rather which they did resolve, was, how much might be said upon any given subject without knowing any thing about it; hence they wasted their fine faculties, their exquisite subtilty, and their metaphysical acuteness, in endless logomachies. Neither did they attempt to supply their want of knowledge by the application of true *à priori* principles, which are to be found by an acquaintance with the constitution of the human mind, because to investigate calmly and patiently the thinking principle itself formed no part of their plan. They decided dogmatically upon every thing; asserting that two contradictory propositions might both be true, and that in a man there is only one form. Their theological inquiries were equally audacious—such as, “Doth the glorified body of Christ in heaven use a sitting or a standing posture? Were the clothes, in which he appeared after his resurrection, real or imaginary? Is the body of Christ in the Eucharist dressed or undressed? Is the Eucharist digested in the human stomach? Whether it be a possible proposition for the Father to hate the Son? Whether it be a lighter crime to kill a thousand men than darn a stocking on the Sabbath?”

But our part is not, like that of Erasmus, to detect with the precision of wit, and to hold up with the vehemence of ridicule, the folly of such inquiries; but to suggest to those who are able to penetrate farther, the hidden wisdom which lies at the foundation of every monument of the human mind, erected in obedience to an irresistible instinct, and intended for a temple of truth, however grotesque its structure, or capricious the taste of the architect; a wisdom not to be discovered to the profane, nor spoken of by the scorner. The scope of our design is limited to a critical statement of the occasions whereby the philosophical mind was originally excited and progressively directed, and the external indications through which it made itself known in the mysterious process of its developement.

We, however, must leave some abler hand to do this much-to-be-desired justice to the scholastic theologians. Our space will not permit us to turn aside from the strict forthright of the subject in which we are immediately engaged.—Ammonius Sacea, about the conclusion of the second century, a learned man, born of Christian parents, has the credit of founding the second school of Platonic mysticism. He maintained that the great principles of all philosophical and religious truth were to be found equally in all sects, differing principally in the mode of expression; and were in their original integrity conformable to the ancient true philosophy which acquired its origin and its consistence, in the East, was taught to the Egyptians by Hermes, and preserved by Plato, who was the best interpreter of Hermes, and the other oriental sages. The symbols and fictions under which, according to the eastern manner, the ancients delivered their precepts and doctrines, were in process of time, said Ammonius, erroneously understood, both by priests and people, in a literal sense; that in con-



sequence of this, the invisible beings and demons whom the Supreme Deity had placed in the different parts of the universe as the ministers of his providence, were by the suggestions of superstition converted into gods, and worshipped with a multitude of vain ceremonies. He therefore insisted, that all the religions of all nations should be restored to their primitive standards, *viz.* the ancient philosophy of the East; the restoration of which, he contended, was the great object of Christ's mission. Ammonius permitted his people to live according to the laws of their country, and the dictates of nature; but a more sublime rule was laid down for the wise. They were to elevate above all terrestrial things, by the towering efforts of holy contemplation, those souls whose origin was celestial and divine. They were to extenuate, by hunger, thirst, and other mortifications, the sluggish body which restrains the liberty of the immortal spirit, that in this life they might enjoy communion with the Supreme Being, and ascend after death, active and unincumbered, to the universal Parent, to live in his presence for ever. These mysterious practices, and continual efforts of abstraction, they distinguished by the name of the Theurgic Art.

Wolfgang Menzel's\* remarks on the history of religion in the middle ages, appear to us to be deserving of some notice. Religion, according to him, is sensuous, intellectual, or sentimental—that is, either believing in the revelation of God in the world of the senses, and assisting its acts of worship by means of sensible images,—or constructing a religion out of the logical forms of the understanding,—or apprehending a revelation of God in the feelings, by an immediate inner illumination, and unintelligible influx of the holy Spirit. But he gives the highest place to mystical religion, which, according to him, unites all these different species of revelation, and embraces the idea of a Deity with all the organs and operations of our spiritual constitution. Images of God, descriptions of God, feelings of God, are only endeavours to reach the idea of God. Only he has the idea of God, who at the same time contemplates, meditates—feels. This threefold act of the mind constitutes the mystic faith, after which every religion strives, and which, he contends, was manifested in the most flourishing period of the middle ages. History then had attained, it would seem, a turning-point, and worthily concluded the first great act of her drama. What until then had tended to unity, from that time forward began again to disunite. A new, a higher, a more manifoldly developed life blossomed out of the ruin of a great prior age, and History a second time took wing into a wider circle. In the remembrance of the past, lies,

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\* Wolfgang Menzel is an elegant writer, though not without some affectations of style: such, for instance, as "Faith is the fairest in the kingdom of spirit, as woman is the fairest in that of nature." His work on German literature deserves approbation, as presenting the various aspects under which the literature of his country may be best contemplated. He has, however, some peculiar notions which should be whipped out of him. He has evidently a *penchant* for the superstitious spirit and gorgeous ceremonies of the church of Rome, and is an admirer of the mysticism of the *middle ages*. This is the more to be lamented, as the subject of mysticism is liable to so much misrepresentation, and this view of it evidently tends to further misunderstanding. Such a kind of mysticism may be the passion of vulgar *littérateurs*, whether in Germany or elsewhere, but it is a purer sort which animates the prime spirits of this age in that land of elevated reason and exhaustless fancy.

however, the hope of the future, and in the prophetic book of history we may read the destiny of the age to come. For even Nature teaches us that the second creation repeats the laws of the first, only in higher evolutions of life. The new developement, however, has only shaped some things of which former times had left, as it were, the raw material; its efforts, moreover, have lain in single directions only—the idea itself it has not yet regenerated, as it was so perfectly revealed during the middle ages. In this may consist the secret aversion or esteem reluctantly entertained for that period of time by its adversaries and defenders. Then faith animated the external signs, and blended mystically the sacred with the beautiful, whether of nature or of art. Upon the works of that holy art, we look with admiration and astonishment, and feel that we are unable to produce anything resembling them, because we fail in the idea. The understanding and feeling seek for substitutes—*that* would demonstrate the object of faith as the fact of an arithmetical calculation, and *this* loses itself in despair: and both regret the past time, when faith animated the judgements of the intellect, and the sentiments of the heart; when, deity being mystically connected with thought and feeling, a holy repose, and an internal confidence, dwelt in the meditative mind, and sweetly involved itself about the believing soul. What the eye saw, then the heart felt; what the ear heard, had a response in the depths of the spirit; and the boldest and finest impulses of thought glowed like gold with the indwelling fire of religious inspiration. Deity revealed itself to the sense as reality—to the intellect as necessity,—and to the sentiment as love. God was something actual—something sensible.—The sense, the understanding, and the feeling, were at once blended in a transcendental state of mystical idealism.

W. Menzel, we have no doubt, would find considerable difficulty in pointing out the particular time, during which this perfect system of mystical religion, alluded to by him, prevailed. Such a religion is, in fact, only a philosophical idea, necessary to be supplied in argument, but nowhere and at no time adequately realized in the field of sensible experience. Such an idea is, indeed, the reality itself; but, alas! we dwell in a world of fallacious appearances. High strains of mystical feeling—strenuous endeavours after a perfect sublimation of religious faith—in individual instances, have at all times, and in all places, been attempted, and not altogether in vain, but never with absolute success. In the writings of the two St. Dionysiuses, the Areopagite and the Carthusian, of St. Bonaventure, of Tarlerus, of Rusbrock, of the St. Catherines of Sienna and Genoa, of Cassian, of St. John Climachus, of St. Bernard, and the blessed Angela of Foligna, this elevation of mind is aimed at with more or less of sincerity and vigour,—but is it not in all these rather “an aim than an attainment?” and is not their philosophy liable to suspicion, as having excluded from the practice of this scheme of universal mysticism, one of its essential elements—the exercise of reason? Too often, even with the best, is ignorance lauded as the mother of devotion, and misinterpretation of the history of the fall recklessly adventured, in order to excuse mere monkish indolence.

At the same time, it must not be forgotten, that all philosophy and religion begin and end in mysticism. Our conviction of the external

existence of sensible things is an act of faith, which must be taken as an ultimate fact in the process of human perception, of which no account can be given, and it is only the more habitual application of it to events of momentarily occurrence, that makes it appear less arbitrary than that act of the mind which accompanies our contemplation of realities out of the region of Time and Space. "More worthy," says Bacon, "is it to believe than to think or know, considering that in knowledge (as we now are capable of it) the mind suffereth from inferior natures; but in all belief it suffereth from a spirit, which it holdeth superior and more authorized than itself." Arduous, however, is the effort of abstraction required to rise to the contemplation of this superior spirit; and no wonder that various modes of ascetic discipline, in darker ages, were attempted, in order to produce that abstraction of mind. But when the principle of faith is professed in a sense which excludes all operation of the mental powers upon the object believed, and which requires us to believe in certain dogmas or revelations upon credit of another, without any rational principles to conduct us as to the grounds of the belief required, such a profession is fanatical, and the professor a fanatic. When the profession of mystical insight is taken up from motives evidently interested, and to gain the applause of admiring multitudes, we may be sure that the thing is an imposture, since all such views are foreign to the very spirit which is professed. Truth, by the true mystic, must be loved for itself alone, and in a great measure for his own individual benefit alone, since the ideas which he realizes are in a very great degree unintelligible except to those who have had experience of the same states of being—for, in fact, those ideas are none other than states of being, and forms of the spirit which is in man. On the other hand, true mysticism may consist with a strong desire—nay, of itself generates such a desire—to make others acquainted with the treasures of wisdom which the mystic has acquired; and, as we have already said, the very difficulty of the task will increase the energy with which he will endeavour to communicate the gifts of spiritual intercourse, and will lead him to put forth what many will deem extravagant pretensions, and to make researches into the world of nature and art for symbols and images, imperfect though they be, of the ideas with which they travail in pain until they be expressed. We should, therefore, pause before we condemn such men as Paracelsus for the vehemence of their manner, or for presumption in anticipating the results of scientific experiment,—in chemistry, for instance,—by the application of spiritual truth, or converting what knowledge they had to the corroboration of the mysteries of faith. Nor should we be less cautious, lest we seem to commend what is arrogant and vain, and proceeding from the pride of the human heart, in which originated the futile search after the philosopher's stone and the endless labours of alchemy. "What must be the power," justly exclaims Madame de Staël, "of human pride, when it insinuates itself into the heart, under the very shape of humility!" But the forms of error are infinite as the mind of man itself; and in the ideal world, errors lie side by side with the sacred deposits of religious truth. There is much sublimity in the following opening of Paracelsus's first Book of Philosophy.



“ All created things are of a frail and perishing nature, and had all at first but one only principle of beginning. In this principle all things under the cope of heaven were inclosed, and lay hid : which is thus to be understood,—that all things proceeded out of one *matter*, and not every particular thing out of its own private matter by itself. This common matter of all things is the *Great Mystery*, which no certain essence and prefigured or formed idea could comprehend, nor could it comply with any property, it being altogether void of colour and elementary nature. The scope of this *great mystery* is as large as the firmament. And this *great mystery was the mother of all the elements, and the grandmother of all the stars, trees, and carnal creatures*. As children are born of a mother, so all created things, whether sensible or insensible, all things whatsoever, were uniformly brought out of the *great mystery*. So that the *great mystery* is the only mother of all perishing things, out of which they all sprung, not in order of succession or continuation, but they all came forth together and at once, in one creation, substance, matter, form, essence, nature, and inclination.”

There is a fine philosophical instinct manifested in thus deriving the origin of things from an inexplicable mystery—but it may be doubted whether the attempts of mystics to solve the enigma of the universe have not brought discredit upon the system. Its great endeavour should be to establish the empire of the soul, and to elevate the moral being, not to account for the existence of external things. The mystic should only come forth into the external world, to be supplied with language and expression, to converse with his fellow beings of a life within the soul, to which there is nothing similar in the life without. And after all, the example of a holy life is the best explanation that can be given of the truths which they would teach. Christianity is a life, and not a theory. This is taught equally by the first chapters of Genesis as by the gospels and epistles in the New Testament. The tree of life was not at all prohibited—but the tree of knowledge was guarded with conditions. Paracelsus and Moses begin at the same point : but the one supplies us with the Divine Intelligence as the one ground of all creation ; the other resorts to the Platonic hypothesis of a mysterious matter—a confused chaos—for the origin of the breathing world. The matter of the philosophers has no existence in the Mosaic account. The idea of a chaos has nothing in common with that which is without form and void. Chaos is imageable—the formless and the void cannot be represented. Earth subsisted as an idea in the Divine Mind, as the invisible centre of a circle whose diameter was not yet. Thus a beginning was constituted, as the commencement of a process, which is immediately operative by the moving of the spirit upon the surface of the space constructed purely by its own motion. There is a question among Hebrew scholars, whether by the Spirit is intended the original Air only, or the Holy Ghost. That a material agent was intended, many think is clear, by the use of the same word in Gen. viii. 1, where it is translated that “ God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters were assuaged.” But surely no one can deem it worth while to make a question long of this subject, if he recollects that in no instance are spiritual operations to be

distinguished from those of the mind which they influence, and the processes of nature which they animate. Such is the simple, sublime, and in every sense highly philosophical, account of the sacred historian;—nor less simply, sublimely, and philosophically, does he immediately after intimate the unfathomable mystery of this process. “And darkness was upon the face of the deep.” This idea is beautifully given by Milton from a passage in the Proverbs,—

“In his hand  
He took the golden compasses, prepared  
In God’s eternal store, to circumscribe  
This universe, and all created things:  
One foot he centred, and the other turn’d  
Round through the vast profundity obscure,  
And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,  
This be thy just circumference, O world.”

In all this we may perceive that the historian has only described the construction of a mathematical circle; that is, he has expressed the divine proceeding by a symbol, not drawn from the accidents of the external world, but from an ultimate fact of the human mind, namely, that law by which the mathematician is enabled to project into a time and a space, which are only the forms of his own faculty of sense, the figurative representation of the idea to be expressed. And this ultimate fact of the human mind, this law of our intellect, by which we behold all things as either extended or successive, is equally mysterious with the sublime work of creation which it is employed to symbolize, and is therefore a fit image of that incomprehensible proceeding. It is a mystery which is to explain all things, and is consequently itself not to be explained. But for such limits our inquiries would go on in an infinite and regressive series, and Science would have no principles to regulate its aims or its attainments.

This view of the subject is finely intimated by the historian’s statement—that “God made man in his own image”—thus beautifully pointing out the analogies which exist between the human and divine. All other philosophers of antiquity—if we except, perhaps, Pythagoras and Plato—explain the organization of the universe by physical laws. Moses resorts, as we see, to the constitution of the human mind, the source of *à priori* reasoning, for an explanation. We can only perceive, understand, and reason upon physical objects, according to our mental constitution; and any account of the construction of the physical world, to be accurate, should agree with the laws of the human intellect. A perfect harmony and correspondence must subsist between both—nay, and the world must be contemplated in subordination to the laws of mind,—for the world was made for man, and not man for the world.

This is true philosophy, and this is true theology. And thus it is that natural science is but the handmaid of religion—its office is to furnish from the materials of experience, exponents of divine truth, and not to supplant what it can only very imperfectly substitute. The whole end and purpose of the experimental sciences, is by a toilsome process to elaborate for it an adequate expression—and the use of

history is but to read us lessons on the nature of man and the course of Providence.

"The whole history of Christendom, yea, of Heathendom, and, perhaps, also of future Christendom, has," we are told by Menzel, "in Germany, and in the literature of Germany, its representation." Of the truth of this assertion we are thoroughly persuaded; but we do not attribute the fact to any revival of the spirit or imitation of the middle ages, but to the feeling which is evidently so strong in all the thinking minds of Germany, that every labour of genius, and every step in the progress of society, tends to the developement of the problem of the universe and of man, which they are manifestly so anxious to solve. Hence it is, that the philosophy of mind has, in that country, made such rapid strides as to outstrip the sublimest efforts of surrounding nations. But of all her philosophers, none deserves more regard—more reverence—than the irrationally despised Jacob Boehme, the theosophist.

The works of Jacob Boehme have been more frequently mentioned than read—and as they form the ground of most of the charges of mysticism urged against the literature of Germany, some account of the man and of his system may not be unacceptable to many of our readers.

Jacob Boehme was born in 1575, at Old Seidenberg, in the Upper Lusatia. His father Jacob, and his mother Ursula, were both of them poor mean peasants, of the good old German stamp. Though evidently named after his father, his biographers perceive something prophetic in the circumstance. "They gave him the name Jacob," say they;—"a supplanter (as the event was to verify) of the Esau-birth." While he was a herdsboy, he rambled one day, about noon, from his companions, and climbing up alone by a mountain, called Land's Crown, he discovered, at the summit, amongst the great red stones, an aperture overgrown with bushes. Penetrating this passage, he descried a large portable vessel, full of money, the sight of which put him into such a shudder that he made the best haste he could from the place, without touching a piece of it: he was never able to find this aperture again. His followers look upon this circumstance as an emblematic omen of his future spiritual admission to the sight of the hidden treasury of the wisdom and mysteries of God and nature. At a subsequent period, the treasure was carried off by a foreign virtuoso.

Boehme's parents provided for his education and advancement by sending him to school, and apprenticing him to a shoemaker. He took peculiar pleasure in attending sermons; and being disturbed in mind with some *scholastic* wrangling about religion, which he found it difficult to comprehend, he resorted to prayer—in which exercise he continued fervently and incessantly, until he found rest for his soul. "Surrounded," he says, "with the *divine light* for the space of seven days successively, I stood possessed of the highest beatific vision of God, and in the ecstatic joys of his kingdom."

The state of mind described in these enthusiastic terms is not uncommon. Every one who has studied a foreign language knows the peculiar feeling with which the student ascertains, for the first time, that what had long appeared so difficult, has, at length, become



familiar. There is a crisis in the mind—a state of transition—of which the immediate effect is startling and astonishing. For so long a period has the mind been brooding over unknown words, forgetting and remembering; and, all at once, the student takes up a book, without design, and almost in despair, and unexpectedly finds that he can interpret word after word, and sentence after sentence. This discovery acts like a sort of illumination on the mind. But if we revert to yet higher efforts of intelligence,—if we contemplate the case of a man of genius—such as Shakspeare, who, without the advantages of superior education, but led by a mysterious impulse to the observation of particular classes of phenomena, and particular acts of reflection, acquires a mass of information; and, with the knowledge, the correspondent power to use and apply it with a fore-feeling of success,—what, of such a mind, must be the first experience of such a consciousness—how must the first effort equally delight and astonish the inspired possessor with its unexpected facility and ready effect! Such an one was Jacob Boehme—an untaught theologian—but he was a man of genius, and a theologian of nature's making, who is excellent in all her works, whether operations of matter or of mind.

It was natural, however, for his disciples, and even for himself, in describing this excited state of sudden illumination, to express it in the language with which both they and he were most familiar—that of Holy Writ. We may, therefore, when we understand the subject, well pardon them for describing this flash of conviction, and the continued state of wonder and high-wrought feeling which succeeded it, as the “truly apocalyptical school of God's spirit, in which the holy patriarchs, kings, prophets, apostles, and men of God, had at all times studied.” An incident, too, is related of his early life, which shows how likely he was to tinge with the hue of his own most religious temperament the most ordinary occurrences of life. While an apprentice, a stranger, plain and mean indeed in his dress, but otherwise of a good and respectable presence, came to his master's shop to purchase a pair of shoes. His master and mistress being both absent, he was reluctant to sell them, and therefore set an extravagant price upon them, which, however, the stranger paid and departed. But being got at some small distance from the shop, he stopped and called out with an audible and serious tone of voice, “Jacob, come out hither to me.” The boy started at being called by his Christian name, but went out into the street to the man, who then said to him, as his biographers report, “Jacob, thou art little, but thou shalt become great, and a man so very different from the common cast, that thou shalt be the wonder of the world. Be, therefore, a good lad; fear God, and reverence his word. Let it especially be thy delight to read the Holy Scriptures, wherein thou art furnished with comfort and instruction; for thou shalt be obliged to suffer a great deal of affliction, poverty, and persecution also. Nevertheless, be thou of good comfort, and firmly persevere, for God loveth thee, and he is gracious unto thee.”

Genius cannot exist separate from imagination—it is as necessary to the mathematician as to the poet, and philosophy and theology were barren soil without it. This little incident is sufficient to show that Boehme possessed one that was sufficiently excitable. The stranger

was probably some man of a religious character, who, calling at the shop when the boy was alone, and had been brooding solitarily upon the workings of his own spirit, found him in an impressible state—and benevolently ascribing the overcharge for the shoes to its proper motive, became interested in the boy's welfare, and gave him some good advice, subsequently translated into the prophetic intimation which we have above recorded. It is evident, however, that it produced a deep effect on his mind, and "the Sabbath Day," to which we have alluded, happened not long after this event.

Jacob's habits of life, being contrary to the ways of the world, procured him, even at this early period, some ridicule and reproach; and at length he was, by the very master for whom he worked, ("unable to brook a family prophet like this,") discharged. About the year 1594, he married, and set up in business for himself. In the year 1600, being in the 25th year of his age, he was a second time thrown into a state of ecstasy by means of an instantaneous glance of the eye cast upon a bright pewter dish; and in spite of all his efforts to the contrary, the sensation of the glimpse he had thus received grew stronger and stronger in him continually. "Such tricks hath strong imagination!" He afterwards thought, and appears even then to have formed some such theory upon the subject, as that, by means of similar aspects, he could obtain introduction into the innermost ground or centre of the recondite or hidden nature of things. His doctrine he has expressed and illustrated in his treatise *De Signatura Rerum*—in which he lays it down, that by means of the signatures formed upon them, or by their figures, lineaments, and colours, he was enabled to look, as it were, into the heart and most intimate nature of all the creatures. The great Lord Bacon thought it possible that the form and essential cause of things might be discovered by a process of experimental induction;—to this point, however, philosophy never has arrived, and it is scarcely possible that it ever can arrive at it. The supposition of its possibility, however, by superior minds and well-educated men, is sufficient to acquit our self-taught theologian of fanaticism in the belief of its reality. The grounds upon which he thought he had made this great discovery, are matter for other and deeper consideration.

All this while, he was furnished with no other book than the Bible; yet in order that these discoveries of his might not be lost or forgotten, he set pen to paper, and recorded them in no indelible characters. In this way he wrote (1612) his first work, which he entitled *The Morning Redness at Sunrise*; which title, Dr. Balthazar Walter afterwards changed into "Aurora." Of this book a gentleman of rank got sight, and was so much pleased with it, that, much against the author's wish, who had no idea of publication, with the assistance of other transcribers, he worked at it day and night until it was copied out. By this means the work became so generally known, that at length it was publicly condemned by Gregory Richter, principal minister at Goerlitz, from the pulpit, until, by his repeated denunciations, the attention of the Senate of Goerlitz was roused to the subject, who summoned the author before them, and advised him to "stick to his last." Boehme was obedient to "the powers that be," and maintained a seven years' silence—during all that time writing nothing.

Such a mind as his, however, could not remain inactive for ever; he readily, therefore, after this period, acquiesced in the desire of several persons, who admonished him not to bury in the earth a talent and trust of so high and precious a nature. In the course of five years after this, he wrote no less than thirty-one treatises upon subjects, the heights and depths whereof, we may well assert, are immeasurable by the human intellect. While thus engaged, he found reason to regret his want of learning, and particularly desired an acquaintance with the Latin language, because he was not able to find, in his own German mother-tongue, words and expressions sufficiently adapted to utter the curious and amazing things which hovered before his eyes. This induced him to borrow, where and how he could, assistance from others: hence the many Latin words and technical terms which occur so frequently in his later works, which he picked up in the acquaintance he cultivated, both by correspondence and conversation, with men of learning; especially with physicians, chemists, and philosophers. The Greek word *idea*, to which he was in this way helped, pleased him greatly. "It was," he said in his figurative style, "an uncommonly beautiful, heavenly, chaste virgin, and a sort of goddess exalted to spiritual corporeality."

Boehme wrote slowly, but in a plain and legible hand, and seldom altered or erased a single word in his composition. The same thing has been said of Shakspeare, though, perhaps, upon slight authority;—we may, however, readily believe that the first expressions of genius, warm from the imagination, are frequently the best; and in Boehme's case, writing as it were by a kind of immediate inspiration from "the spirit of his own soul," as he not inaptly terms it, any subsequent alteration in the words would have altered also the meaning, which at best, and by necessity, they but inadequately expressed.

His reputation was now so high, that many looked upon him as possessed of a familiar spirit; and one man offered him a sum of money if he would make it over to him, as in the case of Simon Magus; others called him a prophet, and challenged him to utter some prophecy. To the credit of Boehme be it said, that he does not appear to have encouraged these delusions. The Simonist he advised earnestly and sincerely to repent of his sins, and fervently implore the Heavenly Father to give the holy Spirit of Grace unto him, in which case he would surely give it to him, and thereby lead him into all truth. And to the aforesaid scornful challengers he answered—that he was no prophet, but a simple man.

Boehme was small of stature, and stooped a little; his presence was somewhat mean, his forehead low, his temples were prominent, his nose was a little crooked, his eyes grey and somewhat azural, but bright and clear "like the windows of Solomon's Temple,"—his beard was short and thin. The tone of his voice was low, his discourse mild and affable—his deportment modest.

In the year 1624, he went for several weeks to *Silesia*, where he was seized with a fever, and was brought from thence by his own desire, in a sick condition, to his own house at Goerlitz. After having made confession of his faith, and received the sacrament, on the Sunday following, he called his son Tobias to him, and asked him, "whether



he did not hear the charming music too?" Upon his answering in the negative, he bade them set the door open, that the singing might be the better heard. Afterwards, he inquired what o'clock it was? And being answered, that it had struck two: he said, "My time is not yet come; it will be three hours hence." A little before six o'clock he expired, dying calmly, as he seems to have lived.

Considerable difficulty was experienced in the matter of his burial. The clergy were still opposed to his doctrines,—which, however, they appear not to have understood,—and were inclined to refuse him Christian burial, as being a heretic. Proper burial, however, and a funeral sermon, were at length granted to him. The funeral sermon had been decreed by the city council, and the text chosen by the relatives of the deceased, but which the minister declined to preach from. Since the preachers had been resolved to comply with nothing but their own humour, they were *all* strictly enjoined by the city council to attend the funeral procession to the grave; excepting the upper minister, who pretended sickness. It seems that the very singing master would fain have absented himself in the village, yet was he fetched into the city on the council's own horse. Amidst a great concourse and show of people, and a procession of his friends, and others connected with his trade, shoemakers and tanners, the corpse of Jacob Boehme was carried by some of the youngest shoemakers, and honourably interred.

And now for the funeral sermon. It was ushered in with a curious and unusual preamble. "Being now compelled," said the preacher, "to preach a funeral sermon—he confessed he would rather have gone a journey of an hundred and twenty miles to pleasure another person, than to perform an office of this nature. But as the honourable city senate had saddled him with it, against his own inclination, he was forced to submit and undertake it." Nor was the conclusion less remarkable. After stating that Boehme's confession had been satisfactory, he proceeded: "Now, as the lawyers always incline to the charitable side in doubtful cases, so are *we* also bound, in doubtful cases, to speak in the most favourable way. Possibly, our deceased may, at his end, have returned to repentance and conversion, *though, by the way, we have only ONE INSTANCE of a late and yet serious repentance, which is that of the malefactor on the cross.* Thus, then, my beloved, I would have you to be admonished to put the best construction upon this; and be ye all and each faithfully exhorted to stick closely to the hearing of God's word, and not to despise, but make use of, the holy absolution and sacraments."

Such was the nature of this insidious and disgraceful address from a Lutheran pulpit. Such conduct may be explained in two ways—from local circumstances, and upon general grounds. Boehme was a *layman*, and one of a very inferior order, yet seemed by his pretensions and writings to infringe upon the ministerial office or province of teaching, which was at that time a thing unprecedented, and consequently regarded as a most unpardonable piece of spiritual pride and presumption. For the Lutheran clergy, though in point of doctrine they professed to have made a great and necessary reformation; yet, as to *discipline*, they retained, together with several other things, an

ecclesiastical authority over their people, in some respects little inferior to that universally exercised in the Popedom itself. The other reason may be found in the "old complaint, that a Man of Genius no sooner appears, but the Host of Dunces are up in arms to repel the invading Alien."

Boehme was a quiet enthusiast; and we venture to assert, that no man of genius ever existed who was exanimate of the fervid quality of enthusiasm. It is a power for good or for evil, but is inseparable from great ability. Enthusiasm has a bad name among us, yet most assuredly it ought sometimes to be accepted in a good sense. The original meaning of the word was good—and implied divine inspiration. In process of time it has come to mean, one whose imagination is continually excited, and his ideas ever in a state of elevated effervescence. It is the "fine madness," with which the poet and the artist are animated, and without which they would not be the inspired men they are. Who so poor of soul as not to esteem them for this quality—this spark of heaven?—and not a few burn with noble envy to possess themselves of the same. But there are a set of imitators in the world who substitute taste for genius, and will admit of no encroachment on established rules, or indications of originality. With such, all efforts of intellectual daring are presumptuous, because unprecedented; and every assumption of superior power stigmatized as enthusiasm or self-inspiration.

And what is genius? The gift of nature—say, rather, the gift of God. This word, too, has acquired a lower meaning with the degeneracy of time. Genius, as it is now understood, is but a vague abstraction—in the olden time, it was an impersonation also. Every nation had its genius, and every individual his. The genii were the protecting and ruling powers of men, of places, and of things—the guides and guards of every species of existence. Of particular provinces they were the tutelary deities; and so high had the impersonated abstraction reached, that Aufustus spake of the genius as the Son of God, and the Father of Men. Of this incommunicable faculty, which makes "the soul of the possessor like a star that dwells apart,"—this divine gift which elevates the receiver to the heaven from which itself descended,—men, in the olden time, stood in awe as of a thing holy, and the possessor himself claimed reverence, as for a being inspired of heaven, and animated with a sacred power. Nor was the imagination then without its practical use. It was not confined to the narrow province of furnishing eleemosynary contributions to the amusement of a reading public; but presumed, although an earthly guest, into the heaven of heavens. And they judge but poorly of the Divine Wisdom in endowing the human mind with such infinitely various faculties, who suppose that either of them is of mean account, or unfitted for the contemplation or expression of sacred truth. High is the imagination borne, in a cloudy chair, in the sublime regions of poetry; but higher still, in a chariot of fire, in the sublimer regions of religion. From all empirical states of things it frees itself, and rises to a state where that is true, which cannot be true according to the senses and the reason, and obtains an intuition of the Absolute itself.

How high it carried our untaught theologian in the regions of celestial speculation, we have now to inquire. And first we may be per-

mitted to say, that we think too great concession has been made to popular prejudice, in Mr. Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection," when he complains that Boehme confused Nature with God, the active powers communicated to matter with the Creator. Is not this a misapprehension to which his meaning is liable, rather than the meaning itself? We mean a misapprehension arising from the inadequacy of all language to the just expression of such meaning. Should we not also take into account the principle, grounded upon the facts which we have already suggested, that the active powers of matter or nature are the expressions of Spiritual influences, without which the latter are not to be discerned or spoken of? Should we not, therefore, rather judge of Boehme by the spirit than by the letter? Even so: and more particularly when we consider the disadvantages of education under which he laboured—and not only of education, but that also, like every man of genius who propounds a "new thing," he had to make and mould a language of his own. And by what is spirit made known, but by matter? and by what is the "invisible power and God-head" manifested, but in the "works which were made?"

The very contrary of the confusion thus apprehended, we verily believe, Boehme designed. For the very first tenet of his system was in contradiction to the doctrine of the Persian Magi and the Manicheans. "I make Light and create Darkness," says the Prophet of Deity, in opposition to the heresy of the former. Now, Boehme's two first principles are of Light and Darkness. But it is not in the sense of the Persian Magi; but in the sense of the Scripture, which says that "God is Light"—by way of figure, or rather intimating that God is the Fountain of Light, natural and intelligent; which is the doctrine of the prophet himself, as stated in opposition to the old tenet which was so repugnant to truth. But not of Light only—for according to Boehme God is Darkness too; he is equally the Source of Darkness as of Light. For all production depends upon the harmonious strife of two contraries. These two principles are co-eternal. Yet light swallows up darkness, as day the night, and the two principles dwell mutually involved in mysterious union. So consistent are the love and the anger of God, which are again occult attributes of Deity, expressed by certain passions of a Created Intelligence, as the light and darkness are the same expressed by certain properties of an intelligible matter. While these attributes subsist in a state of union, they constitute an infinitely perfect Good. But if manifested in separate conditions, they become, in the language of Boehme, two worlds—of which the one is evil; the evil world, however, existing in Deity as a *Power-world* only; that is, potentially, not actually—or, as he familiarly illustrates it, secret and hidden, as the night by the day, or the wick of a candle by the splendour of the light. From eternity, in highest harmony with God, the two principles dwell together—and their separation, as manifested in Nature and Spirit, whether as Light and Darkness, or as Love and Anger, works no alteration in the unity of the Divine Essence. Even the external sun is still the same, though by burning glasses its beams are contracted into fierceness, which is intolerable to sensitive beings, and destructive to combustible objects. No philosophy can be truer, no theology more spiritual, than this. Good and Evil themselves are dis-



covered "in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace." Heaven and Hell are at one in their fundamental origin. How mysterious their union!—what a problem is their separation! Yet no other meaning has the separation, than the idea of the union. Let him who will, then, master this master-idea, and it shall furnish him with a solution of every problem. But that which can explain all things must be all-mysterious, else could it not be explanatory. For the mysterious and the self-evident are the same—and the Absolute is the key-note of all relations.

God is the Sum of Being—the original Nothing and All. Nothing and All are, with us, only relative ideas; but Nothing to us, and Nothing in itself, are two different things. For out of Nothing, Nothing can come. Ere creation, God is Nothing to the creature—but this Nothing is absolute All, an All not compounded of Something and Nothing, but before and independent of universal Nature. God, in a relative sense, may be said to be an Eternal Nothing; but only in a relative sense, for when a thing is nothing to us, it dwells then in itself. Nothing and Something are both alike to God; equally impossible it is for God to make something out of nothing, or nothing of something—Annihilation is not. God is All. The image of a candle is a favourite illustration with Boehme. Light a candle in a dark room—the light has a manifested being; extinguish it—the darkness has a manifested being. In both cases, either had its own hidden being—either can have a manifested being in the same place, but not at the same time. Thus God is Nothing with respect to all posterior things—but All with respect to himself. To Hell he is as Nothing, as light to night, as life to death.

A principle, according to Boehme, is a new birth or life, self-centred, and having a complete government in itself, and desiring nothing but what may be generated in its own centre; . . it is, where Life and Mobility arise where they were not before. Every principle is a world, but not every world a principle; for there are three worlds, and only two principles.

But of these two principles Darkness is the first, because from it, as from a root of living fire, the majestic splendour of glorious Light is eternally generated, which thence is the second principle. The separation of these two principles produces the evil world. Darkness, severed from the principle of Love, is as glowing fire of which the flame is extinct, but in which a dark life burns; which is the Foundation of Hell.

God was before Angels and Creation. Angels are many; as our alphabet possesses our whole understanding of all substances, so God's Word includes all things, and the Angels are his Letters in the divine Alphabet. Milton says of the Angels of God, that "they are His eyes." Boehme, perhaps more sublimely, says, The holy angels are God's Thoughts, revealing his mind, as his operative instruments to manifest the eternal Powers. The idea, the spirit, or the power of angels proceeds from the out-flowing, infinite, mighty, holy Names of God. "His Name is in them." These names Satan abused. The joy of Angels is ever in the transmutation of themselves into forms. The Devil desired to be an artist, in a forbidden manner—this was his guilt.

"Light," says Dionysius, "is the image of the Goodness of God; the Light in God was transcendent, and above comprehension—in angels and men, intelligible—in the sun, visible. And whereas God made the Light, in order that the true external form and beauty of the creatures might be distinctly seen and apprehended, it follows, that there is also another secret and mysterious Light, by which the *internal form* of the creatures may be likewise known, from which nothing can be concealed. And this light is the eternal Wisdom of God, which, being compared with the natural and created Light, is the brightness of the Everlasting Light."

Thus it is that the mystic looks on external things as representative of nobler objects not cognizable by the senses. What a fine significance does this give to the universe; magnificent as it is, how much more magnificent does this mode of contemplating it make it appear! This is the secret into which Boehme endeavoured to penetrate. With him, all opaque matter hid a luminous Spirit. In the seven planets—in the seven days of the week—he found emblems of the ideas intended by the seven lamps before the Throne—and the seven stars in the Apocalypse—the seven pillars of the House of Wisdom—the six steps of Solomon's throne, and the throne itself as emblematic of the Sabbatical Rest—the seven seals—the seven phials—the seven trumpets—and the seven candlesticks. All these symbolize the Seven Spirits of God, which emblem the complete Deity. Our illiterate theologian dared to soar into this sublime region of speculation, and presumed to analyze the seven-fold Perfection of God. Now, how was he to conduct this analyzation—how declare its results? What apparatus had he for the process—what language for its expression? Prayer and Thought were the instruments of his operations. For language, he might select his illustrations from the phenomena of mind—or of matter. The philosophy of mind, however, for him was not—he had to create one for himself. And he had conceived the astonishing idea to account for all material appearances upon spiritual principles, and to prove the identity of the laws which influenced both Nature and Spirit. He was, therefore, teaching two sciences at the same time—Theology and Natural Philosophy—under one name, Theosophy. And no language had he but what was common to both, and all words are derived from the objects of the latter. He, therefore, at once elected to set forth spiritual laws, by their imperfect resemblances as they were to be found in the laws of Nature; and more perfect symbols, indeed, may not be found; for the laws of Nature are but the forms of the human understanding. What are both, but "as strings in the great harmony; as articulate words, but distinct parts of the Love-Sport," as Boehme says, "of the Angels?" Well! Of this seven-fold Perfection divine, he presumed to call the first Spirit an astringent power, sharp like salt, hidden in the Father. The second is an attractive power, vanquishing the astringent. The astringent and attracting powers, he says, by their contrariety, produce Anguish, a raging sense—not by agent and patient, but by violence and impatience. This Anguish is the third Spirit; it is the cause of mind, senses, and thoughts. It is an Exultation, the highest degree of joy, excited to a trembling in its own quality. These three Spirits

are but as mill-stones without corn grinding each other. The raging Spirit cannot deliver itself from the strong bands of the Astringency, and excites Heat by its struggling, the extremity whereof is Fire. Now is the corn found for the mill-stones to grind. Heat is the fourth Spirit—the beginner of life, and of the spirit of life—it generates the Light. The food of fire is cold; for want of which, heat and fire would fall into anguish. But Infinity has no deficiency; therefore the fire, by rarefaction, breathes the sullen cold into the Liberty called Air. Air, again, by condensation (being imposed upon by its father, the Cold) falls to water, which again, by the kindled element, is licked up as Nutrition. The fifth Spirit, which is the produce of Light, which, as we have already learned, is intellectual as well as material, is Love. The sixth Spirit, is the Divine Word—whence Speech and Language, Colours, Beauty, and all ornament. And the seventh Spirit is the Body, generated out of the six other Spirits, and in which they dwell as in their Sabbath. The seven Spirits are the Fountain of all being. All these Spirits together are God the Father. The Life generated by them all, and generating the Life in them all, in triumph, is the true Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity. The Power of the Seven Spirits, proceeding continually in the splendour of the Life forming all things in the seventh, is the Holy Ghost.

Reader, unless thou canst thyself give meaning to these things, we cannot help thee to the significance; but if thou canst, with whatever difficulty, understand them, take our word for it, that they are worth understanding. Thou mayst, however, form some notion of the same, by attending a little to the following illustration, which we have abridged and modernized from William Law.

The first forms of vegetable life, before it has received the Sun and Air, are sourness, astringency, bitterness. In a ripened fruit, these qualities improve into rich spirit, fine taste, fragrant smell, and beautiful colour, having been enriched by the sun and air. This attraction, astringency, desire, is one and the same quality in every individual thing, from the highest angel to the lowest vegetable. Attraction is essential to all bodies—Desire, which is the same thing, is inseparable from all intelligent beings. And thus, by an unerring thread, may we ascend to the *first Desire*, or that of the Divinity. For nothing can come into being but because God wills and desires it. His desire is creative; and the qualities of the Creator must necessarily pass into the creature. Herein lies the ground of all analogies between the world without and the world within. And as vegetables by their attraction, or astringency, which is *their desire*, and is an out-birth of the divine desire, attain perfection by receiving the Light and Air of the external World, so do all intelligent beings attain their perfection by aspiring, with their will and desire, to God, and receiving the influences of the Word and Spirit of God.

We cannot venture to go any further into Boehme's system, which the reader will perceive requires a scheme of natural philosophy for its full developement. And what if the improvement and rapid advances towards perfection which the natural sciences are making every day be subservient to, and confirmatory of, Divine Revelation? The Deity has not left himself without a witness in the Progress of



the human mind, the History of nations, and the Knowledge of nature. Looking at Boehme's labours in this light, we can, we think, readily pardon him for what we may deem absurd in his allegories respecting the Sin of the Angels, the State of Adam in Paradise, and his Fall, which Boehme places not in the eating of the forbidden fruit, but in the division of his nature which occurred when Eve was extracted from his side during that deep and mysterious sleep. His opinions on the latter subjects are somewhat coincident with Madame Bourignon's, upon which we recollect that some popular Encyclopedist observes, that it is refreshing to turn from their disgusting absurdity to the account in Milton of our first Parents' happy state and fatal lapse—thus reducing the subject to a mere question of taste. Both accounts were the product of the authors' imagination; the only inquiry is, whether they shadow forth the same truth? They do; but Boehme and Bourignon had a keener perception of it than Milton, but less grace of expression and refinement of fancy.

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IMITATION OF HORACE.—*Ode I. Book 1.*

MÆCENAS ATAVIS EDITE REGIBUS.

BY WILLIAM S. VILLIERS SANKEY, ESQ., M. A.

ADDRESSED TO ———.

SPRUNG from Helvetia's hardy race,  
 Thy love my stay—thy smile my grace.  
 Some prize the course at Ascot run,  
 When the fleet steed the goal hath won;  
 Or if the Derby stakes they gain,  
 With glowing hopes and fervid brain,  
 Fancy themselves as great as kings,  
 The mortal lords of earthly things.  
*This* man declared the people's choice,  
 By show of hands, and strength of voice;  
*That* man, if in his barn be stored  
 From Suffolk plains a golden hoard,  
 Glad that his patrimonial field  
 Should to the sickle largely yield  
 At harvest-home a crop so full,  
 Not, for the wealth of the Mogul,  
 Couldst thou persuade that ever he  
 A timid mariner should be,  
 And with a tough Norwegian prow  
 The distant Indian Ocean plough.  
 When northern blasts the Baltic sweep,  
 Contending with the raging deep,  
 The merchant, fearful of the storm,  
 Praises his suburb villa warm,  
 The quiet of his rural life,  
 In country box shut in from strife;

But soon, dismissing all his fears,  
His shatter'd bark again repairs,  
Nor learns the lesson, how severe,  
The ills of poverty to bear.  
Another heedless spends the night,  
Even to the blushing dawn of light,  
'Mid cups of French or Spanish wine,  
Whether as croupier he recline  
On elbow seat, or chairman boast,  
Head of the feast, to give the toast.  
The camp and all its bustling noise,  
Charms many with its ruder joys,  
While mingling with the clarion shrill  
The trumpet's sound their bosoms thrill,  
As wars, the mother's dread and hate,  
Their burning bosoms all elate.  
Unmindful of his tender wife,  
The huntsman whiles away his life  
In the keen air, if his swift pack  
Give chase upon the red-deer's track,  
Or Reynard sly hath cover broke  
From copse of ashling or of oak.  
Me præmiums first—gold medal then  
Have placed among the first-class men  
Me it delights through cooling grove  
Far from the people's haunts to rove,  
Or view the dance, on verdant plains,  
Of village nymphs with rustic swains,  
As long as Sandy "frae his hill,"  
Hath breath auld Scotia's pipes to fill;  
Or the Welsh harper wake those chords  
That rung to songs of ancient bards.  
But if thou, partial to my lays,  
Refuse me not thy meed of praise,  
'Mong literary stars I'll climb,  
With front erect, and hopes sublime.

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## OUR LONDON NEWSPAPERS.

BY THE SYNCRETIST.

Who shall keep the keepers—who criticise the critics—who bite the biters—who spoil the spoilers—who plunder the plunderers? Dear Old Monthly, thou who dost out-phoenix the phoenix—thou who hast more lives than a cat, and more transmigrations than Indar, thou shalt do this deed—this comico-tragical, this joco-serio piece of impertinence. Thou art famous for thy daring what none else dares; for glorying in the perils that give others a shivering ague. Sometimes emulating Apollo's self—bright in thy own native genius; sometimes, like a planet, reflecting and glinting back the lustre of learning rescued from oblivion; sometimes, like a comet, exulting in inde-

scribable excentricities ; or, like a meteor, flashing for the mere sake of flashing. Thou art thyself a mystery of mysteries, beyond the solution of *Œdipus*. For half a century hast thou thus lived on, through good report and evil ; sometimes at the pinnacle of popularity, like the Sun when he climbs his loftiest arch, and all the stars hide their diminished heads ; then glimmering faintly as a dying glow-worm, or a cigar in the last agony. Thou indefinable Proteus—ever the same, yet ever various. Unfathomable Prometheus, identifying thyself with all the revolutions of humanity : now stealing the celestial fire, which shall burn through unnumbered generations ; and now chained to thy rugged rock—naked and exiled—with no companions save Mercury, valour, strength, and the liver-eating vulture envy. None shall describe thee as thou art. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are nothing to thee : thou thyself art a metamorphosis beyond them all.

Old Monthly, if ever man loved book, for the sake of pure intellect alone, without office, fee, or emolument, I have so loved thee—I felt an interest for thee, as sincere as other men felt for Buonaparte at St. Helena ; ay, Buonaparte, who differed from Menelaus in one thing especially,—for one having lost Helen, went to seek Paris ; and the other having lost Paris, went to seek Helen. The interest I felt in thee, Old Monthly, was not for any stainless virtue—for, in point of virtue, thou wast long a prodigal son, and nearly as corrupt as literary magazines in general. No ; it was because I recognized, even in thy low estate, the mysterious electricity of a divine genius I elsewhere noticed not. Even in thy ashes lived thy wonted fires—even in the midst of degradation and abuse, the celestial spark was present, and waited but the kindling breath of spirits like my own to be fanned into a flame. And for this *vestigium Dei*—this *divinæ particula auræ*—I honoured thee and cherished thee ; and the more so, because thou wast deserted by the crowd of the vulgar great and great vulgar.

“ Perchance e'en dearer in thy day of woe,

Than when thou wast a boast, a marvel, and a show.”

I saw thee, in the midst of desertion, spreading thy hands to heaven, to catch the mantles of the Prophet Bards, Goethe, and Schiller, and Coleridge, who had received apotheosis in Olympus. I saw thee yearning after a sphere of wisdom, and virtue, and holiness, as yet inconceivable to the hacknied sons of materialism—I saw thee seeking to develope those august and millennial revolutions throughout the length and breadth of the earth, which the idols of inculcated philosophy are utterly powerless to educe.

And thus I regarded thee even then as an intelligent and intelligible power of bringing about God's own designs of philanthropy. I saw that thy energies were feeble and languishing ; but his strength is made perfect in weakness. And when I consider what Heaven hath actually effected within the last two years, I thank the invisible Omnipotence, and take fresh courage.

I know not, Old Monthly, whether thou art destined to live or die ; for such is the state of society, that the best things and the best men do not meet with the best success, but too often are martyred for their very merits—butchered as St. Stephen was butchered, because he had the face of an angel—and damned as Origen has been damned,



because he exploded superstition. But whether thou livest or diest, take this token and testimony with thee.

Yes, Old Monthly,—the vision and the faculty divine is in thee, and shall be in thee to the last. Thou hast at once predicted and explained the rise and progress of elements that will yet revolutionize society. Thou hast evolved a Catholic divinity of a Catholic church, of which all visible churches are but parts and members. Thou hast developed a doctrine of Syncretism, now fast gaining ascendancy over all party politics, which by nourishing factions ruin empires. Thou hast revealed the processes of secret societies—Fourierites, Chartists, and Socialists, at home and abroad. Thou hast urged the cause of Dramatic Reform into a train of most powerful action, and the names and histories of the greatest men and works have been familiarized by thy pages.

Thy influence will yet be felt, and be carried forward into periods when the hand that writes these pages is withered in dust. "Books (says Milton) are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they were. Nay, they do preserve, as in a vial, the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. He who kills a man, kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

But it is time to come more closely home to the subject of this article. Our London newspapers, and what of them? *Quis talia fando*, &c. Who, in discussing so huge a subject, knows where to begin or where to end? Not I. However, be it known unto you, gentle reader, that I am by no means going to describe the whole race of London newspapers *seriatim*, unless I be paid according to number. Those who wish to see a *catalogue raisonné* of this kind may consult W. Grant's not infallible "Great Metropolis," and other similar books. I shall only drop a few hints, anent a few; and, first, of our religious newspapers, some of which are in the following strain.

The day will come, say they, when something like a more Catholic policy will pervade our religious world—when the crown will pay the church, as in every other state of Europe—when that church will send representatives to an ecclesiastical parliament or convocation, consisting of delegates from every recognized religious denomination, and all these religious denominations be paid proportionably, as is the case in France.

It is by no means impossible, say they, that something similar may be brought about in these eventful and revolutionary times, in the British empire. It is not improbable that our exclusive establishment may be thrown open, and tithes, which Adam Smith calls a most impolitic ecclesiastical tax, abolished. At any rate, the Romanists and Dissenters, who ask for fair field and no favour, are so strongly pressing this point, that an ecclesiastical revolution will probably take place within the present century.

Such measures, they conceive, would be a closer approximation to the ancient theory of Catholicity than we possess at present. By *Catholicity* we mean that law of totality which declares that the whole

is superior to all its parts, and that the interest of the whole is best promoted by promoting the interest of all its parts. Simple as the enunciation of this law of Catholicity may appear, none is more obstinately misunderstood. It has been proved a thousand times, that this divine Catholicity is so nearly identified with Syncretism—so closely analogous to it—that the two theories cannot be separated without violence. In other words, the only *true Catholic or totalist* is he who combines what is true and good in all sects and parties that compose the entire system.

Euclid states that the whole includes its parts: this is self-evident. It is scarcely less certain, that the Catholic system, properly so called, which embraces all that is good, must embrace all that is good in sects and parties, which form parts of that system. A Catholic system may possess absolute unicity, or identity of all its parts; or a Catholic system may possess a great multitude and variation of parts, as the solar system comprehends many planets, comets, &c. of diverse characteristics.

If this true Catholicity were once understood—if it were apprehended that a Catholic church and state must needs be a Syncretic church and state, immense advantages would follow. Then would men understand the application of Revelation to policy. They would see that as the Catholic church of heaven consists of the spirits of just men made perfect, whether they were Jews, Christians, Papalists, Protestants, or virtuous Pagans; so the true Catholic church on earth must be inclusive of all that are destined to eternal life, whatever their sect or denomination. They would also see that a state is a body comprehending many members, and that the interest of all these members is inseparably united, so that by promoting the true prosperity of any one, you promote the true prosperity of all the rest—and by injuring any one, you injure all the rest.

To my mind, therefore, Syncretism, properly so called, is a great part of all true religion, and especially of Christianity. Syncretism is a definite and scientific name of that great law of universal love, liberty, peace, and reciprocity, which Christ came to teach mankind. He came to wage war with all the forms of *party spirit* by which Satan, the accuser of brethren, has ever bewitched mankind.

I believe that Christianity will never flourish but in conjunction with this Catholic Syncretism, which teaches men to love one another, and agree to differ, each regarding the other as better than himself. Men must become less selfish, and more social; they must learn that the interest of one individual sect or party cannot be isolated from the interests of other individuals, sects, and parties, or set in opposition to them, without incurring the deadly evils of antagonism—because action and reaction are equal.

Now, by the delusion of Satan himself, if we may judge from the infatuation and obstinacy of its maintainers, many individuals, who ought to know better, persist in decrying this Catholic Syncretism, as if it were identified with the confusion and indifferentism it seeks to obviate. But if they called Christ Beelzebub, the true followers of Christ must expect foul abuse. The great majority of the sectarians of all denominations still cling to the absurd blunder of supposing that their

particular sect, which is really but a little part, is the great whole; Sects are too blind to see that they are sects, parties too bigoted to know that they are parties. The consequence of this amazing obliquity of reasoning is awful in the extreme. By this delusion every one denomination goes on very sincerely cursing and slandering every other denomination as schismatical and heretical, forgetting what Milton observes, that no man is a heretic but he who thinks all other men so.

Thus the Jews, Romanists, Conformists, and Non-conformists, all preposterously persist in confining Catholicity to their own peculiar *cliques*. Hence Tories, Whigs, and Radicals absurdly imagine that they have a monopoly of that entire truth of which they individually present but a particular phase and fraction. The danger to the British empire, from the want of Syncretism and the excess of sectarianism, is, at this time, unparalleled. *Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementit*. Our party agitators will not see what wiseacres they are, till the factions they have nurtured explode, and shatter our entire commonwealth by appalling revolutions.

The subject of Syncretic policy is now coming before the public journals; and the more it is exposed to inquiry, the more advocates it will gain. From the columns of the "Morning Post" we extract the following letter by way of illustration:—

"SIR,—There are extremely few philosophic politicians in Europe. Political philosophy, properly so called, has been for many years at a discount—ay, scouted and laughed at by a mob of charlatanic time-servers and trimming placemen.

"Yet have there been some who have struggled to attain the essential truth of things, even in politics, which Machiavel and Talleyrand define to be the science of delusions—*scientia præstigiæ*. Here and there such investigators have been permitted to illustrate the periodical press with something nobler and purer than ephemeral party squabbles. It is because the 'Morning Post' has been more than usually benignant to writers of this order that such communications as the present may hope for its *imprimatur*.

"Much has been written respecting Guizot and his policy of late in the leading journals; yet his policy remains a mystery to the great majority of the people. The very name, *Syncretism*, by which the doctrine of the doctrinaires is distinguished among the scholars of Germany and France, is still unknown to nine tenths of the British.

"It is amusing, yet painful, to me to be obliged to make these remarks, at the risk of appearing pedantic and morose. But the plain and notorious matter of fact lays me under this necessity.

"Strange enough it may appear to those who know not with how little wisdom the world is governed, that, though Guizot, Constant, Cousin, and Villemain have given their explicit testimony in favour of the syncretic and eclectic systems of political philosophy, people are still asking what views they entertain, and what opinions they advocate.

"The syncretic or coalitionary system of politics has been principally upheld by Guizot's organ, the *Révue Française*, in France, and the 'Monthly Magazine' in England. This periodical, since it has



been edited by Mr. Heraud, whose doctrines closely approximate to those of Coleridge, has thrown more light on the politics of Europe than all its rivals. Many of its writers have been admitted behind the curtains of the political drama. Their predictions respecting the operations of governments, the Chartists, the Socialists, and secret society men, at home and abroad, have been signally fulfilled, and they have already opened the way for the advent of those grand social ameliorations destined to be worked out by the energies of these last ages.

"The 'Quarterly Review' has of late caught glimpses of the same political science, and has spoken out scarcely less fearlessly than the 'Monthly Magazine,' respecting the evolution of a new cycle of syncretic politics, under which the partial and factionary dogmas now prevalent will disappear and melt away.

"In these communications, however, respecting Guizot and syncretism, I do not wish to appear as an advocate, but as a historian. There is in my apprehension a divine and biblical policy to which even the syncretic must yield and give place. My part, at present, is merely to give such explanations of the political tendencies of the times, that intelligent readers may be apprised of what is actually going on behind the scenes, and not be astonished at any startling news from the agitators of Germany and France.

"The most authentic declaration of Guizot's political views, in his own words, has recently been published by Ridgway, under the title of 'Guizot's Theory of Syncretism and Coalition,' translated from his celebrated article on 'Catholicism, Protestantism, and Philosophy.'

"This work seems to confirm what the 'Quarterly Review' lately remarked in an article on the Alexandrian Greeks. As syncretism (says the 'Quarterly') was the prevailing system among the Eclectic Platonists, so is it likely to become a very popular theory among the moderns.

"Perhaps it may be necessary to observe that the word 'syncretism' is supposed to be derived from *συγκεραινω*, to conjoin, and signified conjunction or coalition. Plutarch tells us, in his essay 'De Fraterno Amore,' that this was the favourite policy among the Cretans, whose name implied junction, and who, by the laws of Minos, were instructed to remember that union was the source of strength. 'Thus,' says Plutarch, 'whenever the Cretans are attacked, they join together against the enemy, and this coalition they call syncretism.'

"Coleridge seems to have preferred the principle of divine unity, or that prophetic unity which precedes all sects, to the syncretic union or coalition which endeavours to combine what is good and true in each.

"In the works of Jeremy Taylor, and Richard Baxter, and Sir Matthew Hale, a good deal is said about syncretism in a eulogistic strain. Others, however, have severely censured it, as if it produced a confusion betwixt truth and error. 'Blackwood's Magazine,' in a recent review of 'Guizot's Theory of Syncretism,' falls into this mistake, owing to misunderstanding the force of terms. The syncretist, who knows that all sects contain some portion of truth, wishes to join together those portions of truth, because he knows that all truths, being homogeneous, are capable of conjunction. But syncretists are not such fools as to attempt to join truth and error, because they know

them to be incompatible substances, like oil and water. This is exactly the distinction which Mosheim has drawn between the syncretists, properly so called, who desire to get the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and the indifferentists, who confound truth and falsehood together.

"I should not have stated this so strongly, if several writers, who ought to have known better, had not fallen into this mistake respecting the precise meaning and force of the word 'Syncretism;' and thus, by a blunder of ignorance rather than malice, slandered the names of Cassander, Erasmus, Grotius, Leibnitz, Selden, and other first-rate men.

"Having said thus much respecting the terms of the premises, I proceed to observe that there is throughout Europe—nay, throughout the world—a tremendous struggle at the present moment between the *syncretic or coalitionary policy* which labours to produce coalitionary administrations on the inclusive or representative principle, and the *sectionary policy*, which endeavours to produce party administrations on the exclusive and non-representative principle.

"It is notorious that the syncretic, coalitionary, and pacific policy of Guizot and the doctrinaires has for the present triumphed in France, and saved Europe from a most pestilent war.

"The British press has generally possessed good sense and good feeling enough to congratulate the public on this event, and to support, by every fair means, the French monarch and his present ministry.

"I imagine that this important event is a true symbol of the general current of opinion, a true sign of the times. While contemplating it, I perceive the probability of syncretic and coalitionary modifications of our own government, still more extensive than those that have of late years developed themselves.

"I foresee that the British empire will never regain its proper concentration and harmony but by a right application of the science of coalition. The representative principle must be raised from the parliament to the cabinet, and the representatives of all the leading sects and parties must find place and significance therein. No one exclusive party can any longer hope for exclusive administration. Neither Catholics nor Protestants, neither Tories, Whigs, nor Radicals, will ever again be that which they have been. Our present ministry is strong in proportion as it has coalesced; if it had coalesced more, it would have been stronger. The grinding and horrible system of remorseless exclusion on the one hand, and remorseless opposition on the other, cannot endure. In this sense the days of party are numbered, and cannot be restored without revolutions too dreadful to be described. Men of all orders are beginning to apprehend the truth of Sydney Smith's excellent witticism; 'Parties (says the Dean) must coalesce. Wellington will learn how to agree with Melbourne, and the *Lion* lie down with the *Lamb*.'—I remain, Sir, your very obedient servant,

"FRANCIS BARHAM."

The grand political evil of all the party papers is this:—In their zeal for sustaining some particular party, which forms the government

at the time being, they lavish satire and abuse on the government itself, and make it contemptible in the eyes of the people. By this means, the successive ministers, who, as the chosen officers of our monarch, should be treated with reverence, respect, and affection, have all in turn been made hateful and contemptible. In consequence, government itself has now become miserably weak, and whatever party gets into place is sure to be smashed by the desperate opposition. Thus, the Tories, in abusing the Whig administration so remorselessly, are only preparing a rod for their own backs. They are dishonouring the dignified domination to which they would aspire—misconduct as foul as for a man to prostitute the woman he intends to marry. This vice is so diametrically opposed both to law and gospel, that if it were not sanctioned by certain clergymen, it might be called purely heathenish.

It is certainly desirable that some journal or magazine of the religious world should arise on the syncretic principle—combining whatever is best in the shape of principle or information among all the religious denominations. If this were done, the public would have an inclusive periodical, to which they might refer for the intelligence now scattered among the religious journals in general.

It is likewise desirable that one of our daily papers should attempt this inclusiveness—that it should give a condensed epitome of the principal proceedings of the several religious denominations, abstracted from their particular journals. No doubt the theory of a first-rate daily newspaper is to be thus inclusive of all news interesting to the different segments of the public—ecclesiastical as well as secular.

Perhaps no daily paper is so well replenished by the genius of loyalty and patriotism as the “Morning Post,” which has distinguished itself of late for the richness of its continental information. The noble spirit which Coleridge infused into this paper has never wholly evaporated, and it still holds the highest place among the aristocracy of the country, and indulges in free and philosophic inquiries, in which the higher order of minds are interested.

In this the “Post” is wise. At this moment there is more real independence of thought, and liberality of feeling, among the nobles, than in any class of my fellow-countrymen. They are comparatively well acquainted with foreign literature and manners, and comparatively free from that absurd mania of sect and party, with which all the inferior orders are infected to so deplorable a degree.

“The Times” is an organ of prodigious power in the commercial world. This, you will say, is a mere truism; and so it is, but thereby hangs a tale—which I will not repeat. “The Times” is, on the whole, the best newspaper in Europe: it is singular, however, that the spirit of commerce should not have infused a more urbane and syncretic temper into the thundering journal. But “The Times” succeeds at least in money-making, by adopting most truculent and slashing methods of warfare. It thrusts itself into every stirring interest afloat in the world, with all the desperation of a flaming partisan, and by so doing it is sure to kick up a dust—I mean a *gold dust*. No journal is more thoroughly aware than “The Times” that “party is the madness of the many for the gain of the few.” But those may laugh



that win, and as long as "The Times" sells, the parties may go to the devil.

Yet whatever cause "The Times" takes up is fought with so much talent and so much perseverance, that it generally gains its point. For instance, if "The Times" were to take up Guizot's policy of Syncretism and coalition, it would soon create a coalitionary policy through the empire. By adopting an exclusively party one it does incredible mischief, because it violates the maxim that union is strength, which Æsop has illustrated by his bundle of sticks, and makes void the wholesome doctrine of live and let live, by the absurd sophisms of pseudo-politicians.

But if "The Times" will be a party paper, it is a most fortunate thing for the country that it is of the conservative party. It is fortunate that it stands up for peaceful and constitutional measures, and the rights of property. It is at this moment invaluable, not so much as a correct adjudicator, as for being a *counterpoise* to the tremendous mass of republicanism thrown into the opposite scale, and which but for the powerful pressure of Toryism, would make our monarchy kick the beam.

The editorial policy of "The Times" is to spare no exertions, no expense, in procuring information, and making a sensation on the particular cause which interests the public at a particular crisis. Whether the interest of the public be most the cause or most the effect of the vehement energies of "The Times," we know not, but the two are generally connected. As an instance of what we mean: when the question of the murder of the Jews of Damascus was on the *tapis*, and the religious world stood gaping all agog with wonder and horri-fication, "The Times" took advantage of the panic by a generalship peculiarly its own. It struck the iron while it was hot, and incontinently published two double double papers containing thirty-two pages,—of which, perhaps, nearly a third were devoted to the controversy. No other journal would have dreamed of such a thing; but "The Times" *did* it, and found its account in doing it.

When "The Times" is in a generous humour, as it not unfrequently is, it does generous things with a princely munificence. If any man or book is lucky enough to procure its favour on the score of merit, the man and the book are made. We say *lucky* enough, for this is very often a piece of sheer luck. Like the decisions of Homer's Olympus, its proceedings are unguessable and inscrutable. I will give an illustration; for instance, some rising author, rising in fame, but poor as Diogenes, sends to "The Times" his works, with the hope of receiving one of those noble reviews, which sometimes secure sale and popularity. He knows that his works have originality, power, freedom, eloquence; but what is the use of his knowing it, unless others know it too. He knows that if the Magnus Apollo of "The Times" would but tell the world, what a genius he is, 'twere as good as a pension to him. But he has no interest, no influence, and Magnus Apollo attends to more fortunate competitors, who, measured by the scale of Prometheus, are the merest pigmies compared to him. For above a year he pines in a metaphysical *limbus patrum*—a purgatory suspended

betwixt heaven and hell—flashes of hope—and tempests of despair. “The Times” preserves all the while a silence mute as death. In vain he daily peruses its colossal columns; the fascinating thrilling syllables that compose his own name—never appear. His book remains unsold—he feels that he is knocked up—and that he may as well be knocked down. He determines to reduce his days to his own number—a simple unit. He loads his brace of pistols with particular care, and goes to bed reciting the first stanza in Beattie’s “Minstrel.”

“O who can tell how hard it is to climb  
The steep where Fame’s proud temple shines afar!”

He falls asleep before he has finished the stanza, dreams that he has already shot himself, and gone to perdition. Wakes with a racking headache—foggy morning, November. Determines to make short work of it. Writes a note to the editor of “The Times” in these words: “Dear Mr. Editor,—As you won’t report my progress in the world, my pistol shall report my exit from it. Your’s, &c.” He makes a brief soliloquy worthy the pathos of the occasion; assumes the attitude of a great tragedian—and draws his nightcap over his eyes that he may not see what he is about.

At this identical synchronism, he hears a knock at his street door. “Confound that knocker,” says he, “it has disturbed my equanimity amazingly.” Before he can recover, his friend bursts into the room with a “Times” in his hand. “Ah, Jack,” says he, “you are the luckiest dog alive. Here you are reviewed,—made—sir, made—splendid notice.” In fact, Jack was made. He found himself famous when he least expected. Jack’s book had a tremendous run, and now Jack lives in a very pretty snuggerly at the West-end, and swears by “The Times,” as stoutly as a Turk by the Koran.

But, if “The Times” is a good lover, it is likewise a good hater. Like the eighth Henry, “it never ruins a man by halves.” It seldom parts with its enemies, till, like Macbeth, it has unseamed them from the nave to the chops. This was recently the case in its treatment of Alderman Harmer and the “Dispatch.”

The “Dispatch” has several merits, which its enemies gave it no credit for. Though we are professedly opposed to party journals, it is but speaking justice of the “Dispatch” to say, that it fights its own republican battle with great spirit and fearlessness. Many of its articles are distinguished for good feeling and fair talent. In some respects, however, the “Dispatch” went beyond all bounds of discretion, and exhibited a degree of reckless irreverence for the religion of our country, which at once cooled its friends and heated its enemies.

It is a pity that a paper so full of information, and so popular, should ever have descended to attacks on that sacred volume, which has been venerated and beloved by so great a majority of learned and virtuous men. The criticism of the “Dispatch” on Job’s celebrated description of the war horse, was particularly distressing.

Two letters on this subject came into our hands; the first vituperative, and the latter laudatory. We publish both, for it is fair both sides should be heard.

The letter vituperative of the "Dispatch," is as follows:—

**A LITTLE CRITIQUE ON "THE WEEKLY DISPATCH."**

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

A few months ago, a very meritorious little book, entitled "The Horse," was published in Paternoster Row, forming a portion of a "New Library of Useful Knowledge," which is well worthy of public attention. The compiler, who felt that a spice of religion was particularly needed among the jockey tribe, quoted the celebrated description of the war-horse in the book of Job, chapter xxxix. 19—25.

It was quoted in the Vulgate translation, which is as follows:—

"Hast thou given the horse strength?  
Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?  
Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?  
The glory of his nostrils is terrible.  
He paweth the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength:  
He goeth on to meet the armed men.  
He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted;  
Neither turneth he back from the sword.  
The quiver rattleth against him,  
The glittering spear and the shield.  
He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage:  
Neither believeth he it is the sound of the trumpet.  
He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha!  
He smelleth the battle afar off,  
The thunder of the captains, and the shouting."

The original of this passage has always been admired among scholars, as perhaps the finest specimen of simple sublimity to be found in oriental poetry. It is thus paraphrased by Dr. Young, author of the *Night Thoughts*.

"Survey the warlike horse. Didst thou invest  
With thunder his robust distended chest?  
No sense of fear his dauntless soul allays.  
'Tis dreadful to behold his nostrils' blaze.  
To paw the vale he proudly takes delight,  
And triumphs in the fulness of his might.  
High raised he snuffs the battle from afar,  
And burns to plunge amid the raging war.  
He mocks at death and throws his foam around,  
And in a storm of fury shakes the ground.  
How does his firm, his rising heart advance  
Full on the brandished sword and shaken lance;  
And his fixed eye-balls meet the dazzling shield,  
Gaze, and return the lightning of the field.  
He sinks the sense of fear in generous pride;  
Nor feels the shaft that trembles in his side;  
But neighs to the shrill trumpet's dreadful blast  
Till death—and when he groans, he groans his last."

Such, however, is the peculiar ingenuity of the critics of the "Dispatch," that they discovered (and it may be reckoned as one of the most brilliant of the discoveries of the nineteenth century) that this passage of Job is a very nonsensical piece of trash and blarney, altogether beneath the contempt of their enlightened readers.



The critical remarks in which the "Dispatch" gives Job a jobation are these :—

"Did any body ever read such vile, disgusting trash as this? It is the worst specimen of the very worst description of poetry, or rather, of drunken prose. A horse with a neck of thunder—not so frightened as a grasshopper—with a terrible glory, and above all places, in his nostrils; and moreover not eating grass, hay, or corn, but swallowing the ground, and saying, 'Ha! ha! at the thunder of the captains.' We have two thunders here, one the thunder of the captains, and the other of the horse's neck. Heaven defend us from such horses. Mr. Ducrow may like a horse that amidst trumpets cries 'Ha! ha! ha!' but we have no propensity for such animals. What is the meaning of a quiver rattling? The horse, if he cares for any thing of the sort, must heed the arrow—not the quiver; but here we have the horse heeding the rattling of quiver, spear, and shield, and when he swallows the ground, he won't believe that the earth he is foolish enough to eat is hay or corn, but he won't comprehend or believe that he is swallowing the sound of the trumpet. The whole of these books, published under the name of the 'New Library of Useful Knowledge,' appear to us of an extremely low description."—*Weekly Dispatch*, June 30, 1839.

Such are the Longinuses of "The Weekly Dispatch." Oh! GREAT HARMER! oh! LITTLE JOB! let the devils depict them in the largest and smallest typography.

The friends of Job were troublesome enough. From them, perhaps, has arisen the proverb, "Heaven defend us from our friends." It was, however, reserved for his enemies in the "Dispatch" to scalp the bleeding patriarch. "This was the unkindest cut of all." However, notwithstanding the severity of the wound, it is just possible that the book of Job may survive when even "The Weekly Dispatch" is dead and buried.

In the orations of Edward Irving, there is a sentence which thus describes the majesty of the Bible. "Terror," says he, "hath sitten enthroned on the brows of tyrants, and made the heart of a nation quake; but on this peaceful volume there sits a terror to make the mute world stand aghast."

To the terrors of the Bible, however, and the thunders of heaven, several of our metropolitan geniuses are perfectly indifferent. Armed at all points, exactly *cap-à-pié* in the infernal bronze of infidelity, they snap their fingers at all lightning save thine—exterminating satire.

Awake, then, like a giant refreshed, from thy grim repose, thou Hercules of smashing sarcasm. Thy stalworth club shall cure a thousand scoundrels who are insensible to milder applications. Lay about thee merrily, and spare not—these drunken caitiffs must be "stunned into sobriety."

This is no season for delay; it is high time that the respectable portion of the press should make war on the disresponsible. It is time that our worthier scholars should receive patronage and encouragement, lest they also sink into the same gulf of infamy. We must reform the journals and periodicals that now scatter ruin over our

land ; and, like the diabolic frogs of the Apocalypse, go forth croaking perdition to all that is holy and true.

Ay, we must reform them, or crush them if they will not be reformed. In such cases our mottoes must be, "*Delenda est Carthago*," "*Semper percutiatur leo vorans*."

It is because we have the purification of the public press at heart, that we rejoice at the catastrophe of the mayoralty election. It is as the symbol of a rising spirit of piety and morality that Alderman Harmer's rejection is mainly to be regarded. It is rather by force of universal ethics than party politics that he is at present excluded.

We doubt not, therefore, that the same reasons which have urged a huge majority to vote against certain men, will urge the same majority to vote against certain papers that uphold certain principles.

There is, after all, a sound heart in Old England ; that heart is still in its right place ; and that heart will still correct the errors that most imperil us.

But we repeat our conviction, that the iniquitous sophistries of those publications that seek popularity through the dirty by-paths of profaneness and licentiousness, are not to be converted by argument. No,—this has been tried, and tried in vain. We must evoke another goddess than Minerva;—we must evoke the Muse of Laughter—Laughter holding both her sides.

Descend, then, from thy Olympic revels, oh, ever-smiling, ever-stinging Ridicule. Tickle their noddles into hysterics,—or if you like it better, tickle them to death—for none will "weep over their ashes."

Our other correspondent takes an entirely different view of the case. His letter is in these words :—

"I behold with astonishment and abhorrence the persecution the 'Weekly Dispatch' is now undergoing. If the persecutors were actuated by motives of conscience and moral principle, their outcry might be endured. But who knows not that this outcry is a vile piece of canting hypocrisy, embittered by party rancour—*Hinc illæ lacrymæ*. The "Dispatch" may have its faults, but this hypocritical humbug it is wholly free from. Its doctrines may be better or worse, but such as they are, they have been expressed without a particle of simulation or dissimulation. If any of its writers are infidels or democrats, they honestly tell you so;—they glory in the consummate and unblushing frankness of their confessions. Now, in an age of imposture, when devils put on the angel of light, and wolves walk about in sheep's clothing, this generous sincerity and candour is pleasing from its rarity. It is this which has made the "Dispatch" the most popular of all the weekly newspapers, and will still make it the favourite of the million, till doomsday reforms the world. As nothing is more magnanimous than the defence of those whose case is considered desperate, by judge and jury, you will be kind enough to insert this brief letter."

Some of our readers have sent us some other unpublished correspondence on this topic, which at present we forbear to quote. The "Dispatch" has great power of good and evil in its hands, and we

trust that it will honestly endeavour to extend the former and diminish the latter. In such cases, the responsibility of a journalist, if we may use a mathematical idiom, is multiplied by the square of its influence.

Of late the newspapers have been almost choked with discussions pro and con on the Syrian war, which threatened the peace of European states, especially France and England. Among the letters that have reached us on this subject, we quote the following, though somewhat intemperate, yet piquant epistle.

\* TO THE EDITOR OF THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.  
ON THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE.  
FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

It delights me to find that the "Monthly Magazine" is a steady advocate of peace, which in the present crisis is terribly endangered. If the newspapers are but as steady in setting forth the folly—the madness of war, our politicians may still be kept on the right side of Bedlam.

God is the author of peace, and the Devil of war. I detest war with the same detestation as I detest the wholesale murder to which it leads. The element of its life is the death of its innocent victims, their blood is the intoxicating drink in which it riots, and their curse the inheritance in which it plumes itself.

But so deep is the foolery of human nature, that men have not yet learnt the wisdom of Cicero's maxim, "*iniquissimam pacem justissimo bello antefero*,"—"the most objectionable peace is still preferable to the least objectionable war."

Yes, after the counsels of the sages of peace have been repeated even to fatigue, and been re-echoed by the lips of the dying on a thousand fields of carnage,—here is Europe rushing with desperate indifference into the same gulf of perdition.

To the calm and passionless eye of the philosopher and historian, the folly and criminality of war appear too self-evident for words to elucidate. But what the Egyptian priest said to Solon—"Your Greeks are always babies"—may be applied to modern performers in that saddest of farces, called the "March of intellect."

Yes—incredible mania—here are France and England—the two self-styled most enlightened of earthly empires—twin-born, like Castor and Pollux, and formed by heaven to fight the common cause of philanthropy—nations that should clasp inseparable hands of friendship and co-operation, and cherish each other's prosperity with dearest solicitude—here they are again, aye, again on the point of deadly and exterminating encounter, armed to the teeth for mutual massacre.

And what in the name of astonishment has thus betrayed these brother kingdoms to so foul and opprobrious an animosity?—What but the idiot squabble of some knavish Turks and Gipsies—not worth the powder and shot?

Now, if by a few civil terms of accommodation we could have pacified these bull-dogs of Syria—if by fair and loving coalition we could have lulled the storms of the Orient, it might have been worth the trial. But to disturb the peace of Europe, to peril the glorious har-



mony of Gaul and Britain for the sake of these insane Orientals—by all that is tolerated among men of sense, this is too absurd to be believed. Rather than this appalling disaster should happen, let these troublesome gentlemen of Asia and Africa go promiscuously to the devil in their own way.

God never intended us to do evil, that good may come,—he never intended peaceful empires to pull each other by the ears, in order to settle a hurly-burly beyond the Mediterranean.

I speak of aggressive, not defensive, war. With the aggressor be the sin. It must needs be that offences will come, but woe to him by whom they happen.

But there is a good old proverb—*Forewarned, forearmed*. Our journals and periodicals may do much to avert the impending tempest. Let them, with one heart, and one voice, do their part towards the maintenance of our English law, "*keep the peace*." And in order to keep the peace, let them *provide for war*. Robbers will not attack travellers when well armed; but do not trust in the politeness of bandits when you happen to walk out without your pistols. Help yourself, and God will help you. But if you can't swim, beware of Providence. While we remember the English motto, *Dieu et mon droit*, do not let us forget the Scotch one, *Nemo me impune lacessit*.

SPECTATOR.

## OH! WHERE ARE THEY—THE FRIENDS OF INFANCY?

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

OH! where are they—the friends of infancy,  
The patient monitors of wayward youth;  
Who met me always with an equal eye,  
And ne'er, capricious, caused one hour of ruth?  
Where are their kindling themes of early fame?  
A mother's more subdued impressive tone?  
All perish'd, perish'd like a scroll in flame;  
Save hers, my mother's,—that remains alone!  
Oh! where are they—the lovelier ones, whose eyes  
Enfix'd my ev'ry thought intent below,  
As if there were nought in yon radiant skies  
Could fire the pulses with such quick'ning glow?  
Gone—lost—departed—some, alas! are dead!  
Wherefore that sorrow? that is far the best,  
For though the vital spark's for ever fled,  
I still resign me to the Lord's behest—  
Flattering my anguish, in my heart's vain pride,  
Deeming they *must* have loved me to the last;  
Nor suffer'd cold estrangement to divide  
The happy future, from the happier past,

Had they been spared. Thus think I of the dead,  
 Nor can they now the fond illusion steal;  
 But, oh, the living! they who bow my head  
 In shame and woe, ah! what for them I feel.  
 For some still live, within my very ken;  
 Yet are our souls as distant and apart,  
 As if, before we grew to subtle men  
 Heart had not leapt to meet a kindred heart!  
 Where are the eyes, that led my thoughts astray?  
 I look for their responding glance in vain;  
 Those tender loving eyes, oh! where are they?—  
 Now gazing on me, with contempt—disdain!  
 Nothing is now, as it was once for me,—  
 A change stupendous ev'ry breast has known;  
 And, as to aid my grief, from memory  
 All that was joyous is for ever flown.  
 Need man deplore, because his days are few,  
 Threnetic; over ev'ry vanish'd year?  
 However brief, he yet survives the *true*,  
 And weeps the defalcation of all dear.  
 Had I expired with Feeling in its flush  
 I should have thought the holier of my kind;  
 Ere fell Experience, with a torrent's rush  
 Had burst its bounds, to 'whelm the trusting mind.  
 But now, but now, in sooth, I fain must deem  
 That Friendship is an ideal soulless thing;  
 And Love, O heaven! Youth's divinest dream,  
 A *fearful—dead'ning—dread imagining.*

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THE ENGLISH WITS.—No. II.

ALEXANDER POPE.

THOSE biographers who write the lives of literary or scientific men, often begin by regretting the scantiness of personal adventure. In this they overlook the more important office of biography, which explains the progress of intellect—the causes which have accelerated or retarded that progress—and which thence distinguishes, by elevated reasoning, the essential from the accidental characteristics of the human mind. The literary biographer, too, that is equal to his subject, finds topics of delightful criticism thickening around him at every step. In the gardens of Literature he may

“Cueillez la rosé et la myrte  
 Sans craindre d'appauvrir le champ.”

Even those who aspire to follow and describe the flights of genius, seem to be more anxious to produce a striking picture than a faithful chart. It requires but few psychological facts to enable an imaginative biographer to make an effective portrait. So delicate are the operations of the mind, and so unexpected are the motions of genius, that

a very wide field of data is necessary to support just generalization. To increase difficulties, too, great weaknesses sometimes belong to illustrious men. Alfieri could never understand Euclid's fourth proposition; and yet his pen sustained the elevation of tragedy. Rousseau charmed the philosophers with his "*Emile*," and all France with "*La Nouvelle Héloïse*;" but at the same time he wrote the greatest nonsense about social and political science.

These considerations show the difficult nature of biography; but it will hardly be possible to make remarks on Pope in their spirit—as his biographers have furnished none of those minutæ which serve to the philosopher as valuable indices in the study of the individual, for the sake of the general mind. His works remain; but these are merely indices of his literary abilities—not of his character, or of the true man,—for most writers make a point of writing virtuously, if they do not live so.

Alexander Pope was born in London, in the year 1688. He is an example of early developement of ability. He says himself, that he could not remember the time when he began to make verses; and at twenty his genius seemed to have arrived at all the maturity of which its nature was capable, for at that age he wrote his famous "*Elements of Criticism*."

His father was a linen-draper, and having been very successful in business, bought a house and grounds at Binfield, a place in Windsor Forest, where young Pope read largely in every species of literature. To an original mind, the benefits of miscellaneous reading are great; although novels, modern Latinity, and metaphysics might confuse the faculties of an ordinary reader. Miscellaneous learning gives the inquiring mind a healthy developement in every direction. By extending the basis of observation, it gives more stability or more elevation to thought.

In his retreat at Binfield, he tried almost every species of composition, and failed in them all. Ferguson, the historian, says of nations, that from one virtue that they have, we cannot argue that they have any other, even in its nature the least different. In a similar way, those failures of Pope teach us not to argue general inability from particular failure. A man may write good philosophy, and bad wit; he may even appear contemptible in an ode, and graceful in a sonnet. The temple of Fame has ten thousand gates to admit as many different species of ability.

When Pope was still very young, he became impressed with so deep a veneration for Dryden—from the perusal of his works—that he prevailed on somebody to take him to Will's, (that coffee-house so famous in the literary history of Queen Anne's reign,) in order to gratify himself by having a sight of him. How would the little enthusiast watch with a kind of pre-admiration the words and motions of that accomplished genius! This pleasing anecdote puts Pope in an amiable light.

When he was about sixteen years of age, he fell into a decline, which he believed would end in death. Pope was weak from his birth,—so much so, that he wore stays to support him. His constitutional debility hastened the progress of his ailment; and so lively was



his sense of his approaching dissolution, that he wrote letters of farewell to all his acquaintances. One of Pope's early admirers was the Abbé Southcote, then in London, who received one of these farewell epistles. The Abbé consulted a celebrated physician, hurried to Binfield, and persuaded Pope to forswear books for a season, and take horse exercise. This course saved his life, but no more. He was, to the end of his life, as weak as a child.

While Pope enjoyed his rides in Windsor Forest, according to the advice of his friend, the Abbé, he was sometimes joined in his excursions by an old gentleman of polished manners and superior scholarship. This was Sir William Trumbull, who had spent almost all his life as a diplomatist,—having been successively envoy at Florence, Turin, and Paris, and ambassador extraordinary to the Porte. He was afterwards made a lord of the treasury, and then one of the secretaries of state. Pope, no doubt, was flattered by the attentions of a man of his station, learning, and knowledge of the world; and Trumbull seems to have been interested in the precocity of the poet. By Sir William, Pope was introduced to Wycherley, then seventy years of age. He must have derived some information, and many materials for reflection, from conversations in which Trumbull supplied the facts and observations, and Wycherley the sauce. That these two old men, so well versed in the great world, took pleasure in the society of Pope, proves that he had early been capable of sustaining elegant conversation by pointed remark. Wycherley, especially, was very fond of him, and with the brotherly feeling of a wit, was eager to introduce him to the kindred spirits of the day. Actuated by this feeling, he sent a copy of Pope's yet unpublished pastorals to Walsh, who is still known as one of the English minor poets. Walsh was delighted, and requested to be introduced to a youthful poet, whom, in his own language, "Virgil had not equalled at his age." He was introduced, and Pope was invited to spend the summer of that year at his seat in Worcestershire. Pope joyfully accepted the invitation, and left Will's (which he had begun to frequent with the air of a poet), to spend many happy days with a man who flattered his hopes and guided his first efforts for fame.

The "Essay on Criticism" was written in 1709, and published in 1711. It was favourably criticised by Addison in the "Spectator." A noted critic, however, of the name of Dennis, attacked both the essay and its author with warmth and personality; alleging, as his reason for taking up the pen at all, that he was first attacked in these lines:—

"Some have at first for wits, then poets pass'd,  
Turned critics next, and proved plain fools at last."

Those parts of Dennis's book, the severity of which affected Pope most, were those that reflected on his person. "A little affected hypocrite"—"a little young gentleman, whom Mr. Walsh used to take into his company as a double foil to his person and capacity."—"Inquire between Sunninghill and Oakingham for a young, short, squab gentleman, the very bow of the god of love, and tell me whether he is a proper author to make reflections"—"he has reason to thank

Heaven that he was born a modern; for if he had been born of Grecian parents, his life had been no longer than that of one of his poems—the life of half a day.” These are some of the expressions which show in what style of criticism Dennis excelled. In controversy, as in duelling, men must fight with the same weapons; ridicule must be met by ridicule, and personalities by personalities. Pope chose to have too much dignity for this, and he was right; for calling names is generally the resource of men to whom nature has denied the powers of sarcasm and wit.

His next elaborate effort was “*The Rape of the Lock*.” In this piece he displays all his talents in the mock-heroic. The subject of the poem is the stealing of a lock of hair from the head of a young lady; which delinquency was perpetrated by a young lord by means of a pair of scissors. The story is quite true, and the poem was written for the purpose of restoring the family of the injured lady to good humour. Although the incident is simple enough, and half a dozen lines sufficient to despatch a recital of it, yet so artfully has Pope intermingled his machinery with it, and so elaborately has he described every insignificant motion, that the performance extends to four cantos.

Soon afterwards he published “*The Temple of Fame*,” and the “*Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard*.” The latter contains some touches of pathos. It is amusing, now-a-days, to read the panegyrics written eighty years ago, upon the learning which the former evinces. It is a little more difficult to be learned now. “If books and laws continue to increase as they have done for fifty years past, I am in some concern for future ages, how any man will be learned or any man a lawyer.” How much more applicable is Swift’s remark to these times than to his own.

His early friend, Walsh, was now dead. But his acquaintance, becoming every day more brilliant, kept pace with his reputation. He became intimate with Bolingbroke and Steele, and Steele introduced him to Addison. Swift also became one of his illustrious companions. They often met together and conversed on the topics of the day, and of literature, with that force and masculine vivacity which must have characterised the conversation of these versatile geniuses. The age of Anne had already been raised to the highest pitch of glory by the victories of Marlborough. These men—“the wits of Queen Anne’s time”—won for it the title of the Augustan age of England.

In the days of Pope, ordinary writers obtained a reputation with ease, though they often lost money to get reputation. Now-a-days there are swarms of writers who are never heard of, but who make money, though, indeed, they often lose reputation to get it. Even the great talents of Pope could hardly secure a sufficient sale of his productions to cover all his expenses. Now, every body reads, so that there is a better market; but then almost every body writes, so that, unless abilities be very great, the circle of reputation is proportionally narrowed. Pope wisely thought that a great reputation did not compensate for a small income; so, for the desirable purpose of adding to it, he issued proposals for the publication of a translation of the “*Iliad*” of Homer.

Lintot, a famous bookseller of those times, undertook to be the publisher, and Pope was to receive £200 for each volume. This irksome piece of business lasted five years. He, however, received some assistance in the getting up of the notes, from a few "mercenaries," and, in the end, found himself handsomely rewarded for his labour.

The progress of this undertaking seems to have been watched with the greatest interest by the *littérateurs*. As Pope proceeded with his work, he occasionally read parts of it to his literary friends, in order to receive their criticisms. One evening he was reading some part of his translation before Lord Halifax, Addison, Congreve, and Garth, when his lordship stopped him two or three times, with a speech each time pretty like—"I beg your pardon, Mr. Pope, but there is something in that passage which does not quite please me. Be so good as to mark the place, and consider it a little at your leisure. I am sure you can give it a little turn." Pope concealed his embarrassment at these general observations; but, as they were going home, said to Garth, that he could not guess what expressions had offended his lordship. Garth laughed heartily at Pope's concern, and replied, that all he had to do was just to leave them as they were, and to call on Lord Halifax two or three months afterwards, thank him for his kind observations on those passages, and then to read them to him as altered. Pope, no doubt, was astonished; but he followed Garth's advice, and waited on Lord Halifax some time afterwards, saying, he hoped his lordship would find his objections to those passages removed: and then he read them to him exactly as they were at first. His lordship was satisfied, and said, "Ay, now they are perfectly right: nothing can be better." There are a great many Halifaxes among literary men,—“danglers after wit, who, like those after beauty, spend their time in humbly admiring.”

When the first volume of the translation of the "Iliad" was published, Tickell, the friend of Addison, and author of several papers in the "Spectator," brought out a rival translation. Immediately, the whole of the *littérateurs* ranged themselves into two factions. The town was for Pope, and a few discontented wits at Button's coffee-house were for Tickell. The smaller sect, as Pope said, made up in industry what they wanted in number; so that they, no doubt, kept the whole literary world in an excitement. While the contention was still high, Pope wrote a letter to Secretary Craggs, in which he alludes to Addison as a secret supporter of Tickell. He writes, "We have, it seems, a great Turk in poetry, who can never bear a brother on the throne; and he has his mutes, a set of nodders, winkers, and whisperers, whose business is to strangle all other offsprings of wit in their birth." This Turk was Addison, who gave the preference to Tickell's version, out of envy, it is said, of Pope's high and increasing fame. Minute accounts are given of the coldness that took place between these two great writers; but it is unfair (not to speak of charity) to impute motives with any confidence, when the nature of the details is such, that the smallest variation in any of the particulars would give the whole affair a new aspect, and warrant different conclusions. And who is assured that these details are faith-



fully or fully related; or that some unhappy mistake, which pride would not condescend to explain to resentment, did not alienate these friends from each other?

Pope's next literary achievements were an edition of Shakspeare, published in 1721; and a translation of the "*Odyssey*," in verse, published in 1725. The former publication was attacked by a cloud of commentators, headed by a critic of the name of Theobald, who, indeed, pointed out some errors and deficiencies. Pope, however, did much for the study of Shakspeare, who had been more talked about than read. In the latter work, he had the assistance of Broome and Fenton, who did the drudgery. Broome's name afforded the frequenters of the coffee-houses room for a pun, which soon appeared in the shape of an epigram:—

"Pope came off clean with Homer; but they say  
Broome went before, and kindly swept the way."

The only criticism of the translation of the "*Odyssey*" which exhibited any learning or candour, was that of Spence, prelector of poetry at Oxford. Pope sought his acquaintance, and endeavoured, not without success, to get him advanced in the church.

In conjunction with Swift, Pope published some amusing miscellanies, in three volumes. The "*Memoirs of P. P., Clerk of this Parish*," were intended to ridicule Burnet's self-importance in his "*History of his Own Time*." The "*Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*," and "*The Art of Sinking in Poetry*," were parts of these miscellanies. The former is a fragment of a greater undertaking; and the latter dissects the works of a host of critics, which are proved, by a variety of apt quotations, to be all illustrations of the Bathos, or silly profound. At this attack, "the whole tribe fell into so violent a fury, that, for half a year or more, the public prints, in most of which they had some property, were filled with the most abusive falsehoods they could possibly devise." For this flood of slander Pope was revenged in the "*Dunciad*."

The "*Dunciad*" created the utmost confusion among the host of minor writers, who, it seems, were almost all enemies of Pope. There are always a few critics in the republic of letters, who derive their importance less from their own severity than from the sensibility of authors. Indeed, they are often destitute of talents and prudence; the latter quality, however, being supplied by the instinct of cowards, which gives as an insinuation, what, as an assertion, would lodge them in prison. High-flown poets, however, often talk of these few critics as an innumerable tribe of enemies, who generally, however, have no existence but in their imagination—which, for once, perhaps, vanity has made fertile. Pope is an exception here. The number of his personal and literary enemies was undoubtedly great. The door of the publisher of the "*Dunciad*" was blocked up by crowds eager to prevent its sale. On all sides there were entreaties, threats, and cries of treason. Pope contemplated the consternation of his enemies with exultation. He, himself, has given the following laughable description of its first publication:—"Many ludicrous circumstances attended it. The dunces (for by this name they were called) held weekly clubs, to

consult of hostilities against the author : one wrote a letter to a great minister, assuring him that Mr. Pope was the greatest enemy the government had ; and another bought his image in clay, to execute him in effigy ; with which sad sort of satisfaction the gentlemen were a little comforted. Some false editions of the book having an owl in their frontispiece ; the true one, to distinguish it, fixed in its stead an ass laden with authors ; then another surreptitious one being printed with the same ass ; the new edition in octavo returned, for distinction, to the owl again : hence arose a great contest of booksellers against booksellers, and advertisements against advertisements ; some recommending the addition of the owl, and others of the ass,—by which names they came to be distinguished, to the great honour of the gentlemen of the “Dunciad.”

It is an old and true remark, that a sarcasm hurts the interest of its author as much as it wounds the weakness of its victim. Thus men of wit shine more effectually at their own expense, than at that of those who are the objects of their severity. Pope sometimes wantonly touched his best friends to the quick. He trusted to himself for his wit ; the shaft ready, he seemed too often to trust to Providence for a mark. When he saw his error, he looked to dissimulation for an escape. So pitiful a progress was worthy of so contemptible a conclusion. The most remarkable instance of this ill-looking feature of Pope's character occurred immediately after the effervescence of the dunces had subsided. In 1731, he published an “Essay on Taste,” which ridiculed Lord Burlington so flagrantly, that he very materially damaged his interest with the whole body of the nobility.

In 1734, was published the “Essay on Man.” The general ideas are, beyond all doubt, borrowed from Bolingbroke. De Crousaz, a learned Swiss writer, attacked it as the production of a fatalist. De Crousaz is known to the students of continental literature by his elaborate work on Logic, in which his acuteness sometimes outstrips his common sense, as in the wise *non sequitur*, that, “*puisque l'on admet de l'étendue sans pensée, pourquoi refusera-t-on d'admettre de la pensée sans étendue ?*” De Crousaz was right ; but nevertheless Pope was not a fatalist. He did not perfectly comprehend his own system, but merely made use of a few empty profundities as texts, to be illustrated by poetical descriptions and remarks of a tangible character. The main idea of the “Essay” is, that whatever is, is right—or, which is much the same thing—all for the best. Voltaire's “Candide” puts this doctrine into a variety of ludicrous situations. This absurd hallucination was actually believed. No doubt, poets are the likeliest to be the dupes of its grand generality, as there is something romantically sublime in the idea which generously sanctions murder, treachery, and ingratitude as parts of the “great whole” of “Heaven's design.” Warburton's defence of Pope's production is elaborately impotent.

Pope finished his career as an author, by the publication of some epistles in verse, and by giving to the world a new edition of his whole works. He had now lost by death some of his most dear and talented associates. Wycherley, Trumbull, and Walsh had died while he was still making new friends. But in maturer life, his private hours had

been rendered lonelier and more lonely by the departure of Swift for Ireland, and by the deaths of Gay, Congreve, and the excellent Arbuthnot. These losses depressed his spirits; they were a warning that he himself should prepare to pass "the bourn." For five years preceding the year of his death, he had been afflicted with disorders which no physician was able to cure. In May, 1744, being persuaded that death was not far distant, he complied with the ordinance of that church to which he belonged, and took the last sacraments. On the 27th of that month he was able to sit at the dinner table; but so much at the point of death did he appear, that a lady present said, "This is quite an Egyptian feast." If the allusion was understood, it must have been horrifying. At an Egyptian banquet, a skull was sometimes set upon the table.

It is affecting to know that Bolingbroke wept over the last hours of Pope. The circumstance was honourable to both; and the unfortunate error or misunderstanding which gave occasion to Bolingbroke's subsequent conduct, cannot be looked upon without the deepest pain.

The last words of illustrious men have a melancholy interest. Those of Pope cannot fail to impress us with the frivolity of all life's hopes and anxieties when compared with the great end of our being. But they are more satisfactory to the mere philosopher, than to the Christian. "There is nothing that is meritorious but virtue and friendship; and, indeed, friendship itself is only a part of virtue." These are the beautiful words of Pope—and they were his last; he died soon after he spoke them, May 30th, 1744.

It will be proper, before examining Pope's works, to inquire into the nature of poetry; and to lay down a standard for present guidance in poetical criticism.

Poetry is the language of emotion. If the emotion be light and joyous, it may be expressed either literally or through the beautiful illusions of the fancy. If the feeling, however, whether of joy or of grief, be profound, the ingenuities of wit and fancy are incompatible with its utterance. The utterance of profound emotion must, therefore, be simple. This is one of the greatest difficulties of the poet, as well as of the artist; and a delicate test of genius. Comparatively speaking, it is easy for the actor, with all the pathos of tone, and all the expressiveness of motion and attitude, to give effect to joy or grief. But it is the prerogative only of genius to throw around us, as we read, all the spells of language, and to carry us unconsciously away in a tide of emotion.

No one can contemplate a beautiful scene, without a gentle filling of the heart with pleasure. The expression of this emotion is poetry. There are some objects in themselves poetical; and the poet cannot describe them but in the language of pleasing emotion. Hence, a description may be poetry; though the description must always be of a poetical object. This is illustrated by the first stanza of Southey's "Thalaba the Destroyer." The beginning and ending expression of emotion is highly appropriate:—

"How beautiful is Night!

A solemn stillness fills the dewy air,



No cloud, or speck, or stain  
 Breaks the serene of heaven.  
 In full orb'd glory, the resplendent moon  
 Rolls through the dark blue depths;  
 Beneath her steady ray  
 The desert circle spreads  
 Like the round ocean girdled with the sky,—  
 How beautiful is Night !”

This description is literal ; yet it is poetry, because the objects are poetical, and awaken emotion.

There is a plain line of demarcation between prose and poetry. Nature is here the teacher. Man can go no higher than first principles, and nature is their fountain. But this line of demarcation is more a matter of feeling than of demonstration. The passionless philosopher, inured to the rigid discipline of geometry, will be apt to regret this. And why so? Are not all those theorems which so well indicate the elevation of the Grecian genius, based on axioms which derive their value from mankind's universal *perception* of them? Why not, also, that the line of demarcation between prose and poetry should be for ever defined by the universal *feeling* of mankind?

It is said, however, that different men have different feelings; that an object strikes one man as poetical, and another as prosaic. To this it is obvious to reply, that almost every object may be viewed in a poetical or prosaic light, according to the will of the spectator. A steam-engine, considered as a machine for the more easily attaining certain ends, is a prosaic object; but considered as the child of human genius, and multiplying the blessings of the human race, it borrows, for a moment, a poetical character, because in this view it awakens an elevated emotion. But objects are classed into poetical or prosaic, according to their tendency to awaken emotion: for instance, a beautiful sunset, or an old ruined school-house, is a poetical object; a cotton manufactory is a prosaic object.

Poetry addresses itself to the passions: prose to the reason. Poetry, in her lighter walks, is adorned with the graces of fancy; in her higher flights, she is exalted by the creations of the Imagination. Prose is attended by fancy, only that the understanding may be assisted and conducted more rapidly through thought. Prose enlightens the human mind; fills it with facts, dates, precepts, and principles. Poetry fills it with images of beauty and goodness, touches the soul with sympathy, and fires it with emulation; and the moral nature of man is thus rendered more worthy of his intellectual.

Tried by this susceptible poetical standard, the works of Pope will not stand high. The first few lines of the “*Essay on Criticism*” may be put into prose in the following way:—

“It would not be easy to determine whether greater want of skill be shown by authors or by critics; but it is surely less dangerous to tire our patience, than to mislead our judgement. Yet, for one author that writes dully, there are ten critics whose decisions are erroneous. Our judgements, like our watches, always vary a little *from one another*; yet every one believes his own. True genius is as seldom the attribute of the poet, as true taste is of the critic. Both must draw

their light from heaven; the one born to judge, as well as the other to write."

Yet, if we examine the subject more closely, we shall find that most men have the elements of a correct judgement. The superiority lies in the developement of these elements: and so vast is science, and so limited man's capacity, that even after his judgement has attained its maturity, it is formed to judge only of a certain class of things. The true critic must know his own part in the great field of science. He must follow nature, which is the source of art, and its test; or if he follow rules, it must be those which were long since discovered, not invented; and which are, indeed, still nature—but nature in a methodical dress. This is pointed and judicious prose: it is not poetry. Poetry must be different from a work of mere syllable and rhyme, therefore, or else the author of the "Wealth of Nations" might be transformed into a poet by any one who had a knack at crambo. Almost all Pope's compositions are efforts of the understanding, illustrated by fancy: seldom, indeed, are they warmed by the heart. Wit and fancy were the main features of Pope's intellect. He was a great wit; but not a great poet. This decision, indeed, is contrary to that of general criticism; but if it were proper to charge with presumption every one that differed from the opinions of critics of reputation, independent thinking would be at an end; and literature in danger of being ruined by nothing but the modesty of its admirers.

The "Essay on Man" is a metaphysical poem. Why is there no legal poem; or political economical poem? Darwin, indeed, endeavoured to give *scientific* details a poetical dress; but this will always be unnatural. Much knowledge, and even *cleverness*, may be displayed; but very little taste. There are many contortions which excite surprise without exciting pleasure.

Pope not only had not the sensibility of a poet; he had not the invention of one. The machinery of the "Rape of the Lock" argues no invention whatever. Those critics who say so, misapply the word. "It is very easy," says a sensible critic in the Edinburgh Review, "to raise supernatural beings; but it is not so easy to manage them when they are got." It must be allowed, that Pope has managed his spiritualities with much skill: but it is the understanding which enables us to avoid incongruity. The subject of poetical invention, however, will perhaps be afterwards touched upon.

The "Essay on Man" is Pope's most ambitious performance. The "Design" of it is an excellent example of "The Unintelligible, from a desire of being profound." It is not disparaging Pope's talents for metaphysics, to say that his descriptive powers and his fancy shine throughout at the expense of his understanding. The metaphysics of his time were more artful than candid. A clever writer would give any thing for a new theory, especially if there was a dash of improbability about it, for then there would be more scope for ingenuity in its defence. The controversy between Leibnitz and Clarke is undoubtedly at the head of all the metaphysical attempts of their time. "Whether is space an absolute being?" "Whether the will of God can act without reason?" and, "Whether God ever needs to mend his machine of the universe?" are specimens of the questions discussed: but

behold them at last hanging almost the whole controversy on one word, and quarrelling about its meaning. This is a key to by far the most of the metaphysics of their time. The strength of an argument or an objection frequently lay in the peculiar use of a single word or phrase. This and some other defects degrade Pope's production to the level of the other speculations of his time; of almost all which it may be said, that they were so profound as to have no foundation whatever. Pre-established harmony, optimism, and other theories, have fallen into contempt. That Pope's production, kindred in its origin, should have escaped their fate, is to be attributed, perhaps, not so much to the reputation of his other works, as to that beauty of expression and illustration with which he has developed his theory. But the graces of language can never consecrate error: and the "Essay on Man" is, at best, a noble ruin, where we see with regret that the architect has been wanting, though the chisel has indeed been in the hand of a master.

The "Essay on Criticism" is an English "Art of Poetry." Its numbers are smooth. Harmony of verse Pope brought to a high degree of excellence. But there is the capital defect of writing an "Art of Poetry" in verse at all. The ear might be pleased in prose as well as in verse; although, when the understanding is instructed, *its* ear is not very solicitous. "The most noble thought cannot please the mind, when the ear is wounded," says Boileau, with more confidence than discrimination. *Poetical* composition, no doubt, is greatly heightened in its effects by the use of melodious words and the arrangement of pauses. Here Pope's skill and labour were eminently successful; and it is the more wonderful, as his abrupt and brilliant thoughts are the very reverse of those that "voluntary move harmonious numbers."

Pope borrowed many of his thoughts and much of his manner from French writers; indeed, many of his reflections are minutely copied from Pascal and Rochefoucault; but principally to Boileau is he indebted for his manner. Many instances are given of this in Warton's "Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope." Literary France was at this period in its prime. It was then "that great nation which gave the tone of thought to the European continent." "Surtout ne croyez pas," exclaims Voltaire with exultation, in allusion to this superiority, "que cet empire de l'esprit, et cet honneur d'être le modèle des autres peuples, soit une gloire frivole: ce sont les marques infaillibles de la grandeur d'un peuple." English literature, however, was not so much affected as was that of the continent; where, indeed, it was despotic.

Many passages in Boileau are recognized as the originals of some of Pope's happiest expressions. "From grave to gay, from lively to severe," is a translation from Boileau. The satire of the following lines,—

"Where'er you find 'the cooling western breeze,'  
In the next line it 'whispers through the trees';  
If crystal streams 'with pleasing murmurs creep,'  
The reader's threatened (not in vain) with 'sleep,'"—

is borrowed from a similar passage in Boileau's third Satire:—



"Si je louais Philis en miracles féconde  
 Je trouverais bientôt à nulle autre seconde.  
 Si je voulais vanter un objet nompareil,  
 Je mettrais à l'instant plus beau que le soleil,  
 Enfin, parlant toujours, d'astres et de merveilles  
 De chefs-d'œuvre des cieux, de beautés sans pareilles."

Pope, it seems, did not hesitate to borrow (as it is leniently termed) a thought or an expression wherever he found it. After deducting what is reasonable for coincidences, there is enough left to be evidence of his looseness in this matter; and it must be confessed that it is sometimes his best thoughts that afterwards turn out to have been stolen. It would seem that the luminaries of the literary world partake of the nature of planets as well as that of suns; while they dispense their own light, they also reflect much of the light of one another.

The "Essay on Criticism" abounds in sallies of wit. Wit and satire are the great weapons of Pope. He had also the nicest ear for the harmony of verse. But in the "Essay on Criticism," and his other didactic or satirical pieces, it is the very harmony of the composition that mars the effect of his rapid and pointed witticisms. This is another reason why it is to be regretted that he ever gave to the world, in verse, his satirical essays.

The music with which Pope's ear was so much delighted, is altogether incompatible with the idiomatic condensation which is necessary to the effect of wit. Poetry always degenerates, when it is translated into the familiar words of plain prose. On the other hand, wit always suffers, when it is put into a metrical form. Measure and music are pleasing auxiliaries in poetry, because its conceptions may be more deliberately unfolded than those of wit. Wit is sudden in its combinations, keeps the understanding on the alert, and after all, *jerks* it to a great distance. It is therefore unnatural to make this abrupt and executive element of thought partake in the flow of numbers. It is much more effective to say, "Authors are as partial to their wit, as critics to their judgement," than to write—

"Authors are partial to their wit, 'tis true,  
 But are not critics to their judgment too?"

Pope laboured at his pieces with the greatest patience and anxiety. The brilliant results of this labour are its excuse. Quickness in the apt expression of an idea is decidedly a test of ability. But who could improvise such compositions as the "Moral Essays," or the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," in which almost every line is a shaft of satire, pointed by wit, and inlaid with the gems of fancy?

In these efforts, indeed, Pope's peculiar excellencies are displayed in greatest profusion. The first part of the "Epistle on the Knowledge and Characters of Men," addressed to Lord Cobham, is eminently true, and furnishes materials for profound meditation on the *rationale* of human nature. In the "Epistle on the Characters of Women," he libels the fair sex with all that sprightliness and vivacity which charm them so much: so that a self-expecting lady may read it with the utmost delight. With a few strokes he brings forward with dramatic vivid-

ness a Chloe or an Atossa, realizing his own beautiful conception of the picture :—

“ Come, then, the colours and the ground prepare !  
Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air ;  
Choose a firm cloud, before it fall, and in it  
Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.”

She speaks a word ; we discriminate her character ; and she vanishes to give place to another who ceases not to sustain the equal brilliancy of the whole. Throughout these Essays and his “ Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot,” Pope ministers to all the sensibilities of delight that can be awakened by the most refined taste and the most extensive knowledge of the world. He shifts the scenes with great rapidity and skill ; he himself being the chorus to draw the pleasing lesson, or inflict on vice the sting of reproach.

In these efforts of Pope, which belong more to poetry, the harmony of his numbers must be exquisitely appreciated. There is no poet that equals him in this respect ; although in the mere essentials of poetry he has many superiors. He often, with wonderful skill, develops an image in language, whose music seems to correspond to it. In the following passage, how well are the images sustained by the language :—

“ Four swans sustain’d a car of silver bright,  
With heads advanced, and pinions stretch’d for flight ;  
Here, like some furious prophet Pindar rode,  
And seemed to labour with the inspiring god,  
Across the harp a careless hand he flings,  
And boldly sinks into the sounding strings ;  
The figured games of Greece the column grace,  
Neptune and Jove survey the rapid race.  
The youths hang o’er their chariots as they run ;  
The fiery steeds seem starting from the stone :  
The champions in distorted postures threat ;  
And all appear’d irregularly great.”

After this rugged expressiveness, the music of the next lines swells on the ear with delicious softness :—

“ Here happy Horace tuned the Ausonian lyre  
To sweeter sounds, and tempered Pindar’s fire.”

The harmony of many passages in Pope tempts us to read them twice, with different pauses, for the double gratification of the ear and the understanding. Poetry has reached the perfection of harmony when the modulations and pauses of the sound, and those necessary to the apprehension of the thoughts, are identical ; and this rare excellence Pope sometimes happily exemplifies.

The “ Dunciad ” is a satire which is every day becoming more difficult to understand ; because almost nobody now knows or cares any thing about those whom it immortalizes as dunces. This is the ultimate fate of all those efforts of wit which derive their brilliancy from local quarrels or individual interests. The notes are not the least amusing part of the performance. The reader is coolly called upon to take

a warm interest in some paltry piece of business that took place between parties, of whom, on account of their ordinary and every-day characters, it would be a satisfaction to know nothing. Persons and things are as minutely canvassed; as many doubts raised and solved, as at a criminal trial. A curious interest gradually arises—we see, and almost wonder, that the world, a hundred years ago, was in its prime, as it is now; and that London was then, as it is now, the great theatre for the full display of human pride, stupidity, and artifice.

Pope's prose is inferior to his verse, because he evidently reserved all his best thoughts for a metrical display. His letters glisten with artificial sprightliness: some of them are a continued tissue of metaphor and conceit. This could not have been done without some blotting—if not real labour: and much care of this kind is sure to annihilate the spirit of epistolary writing. His most finished prose compositions are his Prefaces to Homer and Shakspeare, and his "Letter to Lord Hervey." In this last essay he rivals the virulence of his invectives on Addison in the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot." It is severe, and even fierce. There is none of the elegance which is the charm of his similar attempts in verse.

The following are those passages which exemplify Pope's talents in prose sarcasm. There is much wit in them, but, it must be allowed, there is more rancour.

"Were it the mere excess of your lordship's wit, that carried you thus triumphantly over all the bounds of decency, I might consider your lordship on your Pegasus, as a sprightly hunter on a mettled horse; and while you were trampling down all our works, patiently suffer the injury, in pure admiration of the noble sport. But should the case be quite otherwise,—should your lordship be only like a boy that is run away with—and run away with by a very foal; really common charity, as well as respect for a noble family, would oblige me to stop your career, and help you down from this Pegasus.

"Surely, the little praise of a writer should be a thing below your ambition; you, who were no sooner born, but in the lap of the Graces; no sooner at school, but in the arms of the Muses; no sooner in the world, but you practised all the skill of it; no sooner in the court, but you possessed all the art of it! Unrivalled as you are in making a figure, and in making a speech, methinks, my lord, you may well give up the poor talent of turning a distich. And why this fondness for poetry? Prose admits of the excellencies you most admire, diction and fiction. \* \* \* \* The appellations of foe to human kind, an enemy like the devil to all that have being; ungrateful, unjust, deserving to be whipt, blanketed, kicked, nay killed; a monster, an assassin, whose conversation every man ought to shun, and against whom all doors should be shut;—I beseech you, my lord, had you the least right to give, or to encourage or justify any other in giving, such language as this to me? Could I be treated in terms more strong or more atrocious, if, during my acquaintance with you, I had been a betrayer, a backbiter, a whisperer, an eaves-dropper, or an informer? Did I, in all that time, ever throw a false die, or palm a foul card upon you? Did I ever borrow, steal, or accept either money, wit, or advice from you? \* \* \* \* Did I ever do you so great an injury as to



put off my own verses for yours, especially on those persons whom they might most offend? \* \* \* \* \* I am persuaded you can reproach me truly with no great faults, except my natural ones, which I am as ready to own, as to do all justice to the contrary beauties in you. It is true, my lord, I am short, not well shaped, generally ill dressed, if not sometimes dirty; your lordship and ladyship are still in bloom; your figures such as rival the Apollo of Belvidere, and the Venus de' Medicis; and your faces so finished, that neither sickness nor passion can deprive them of colour; I will allow your own in particular to be the finest that ever man was blest with; preserve it, my lord, and reflect that to be a critic would cost it too many frowns, and to be a statesman too many wrinkles! I further confess, I am now somewhat old; but so your lordship and this excellent lady, with all your beauty, will (I hope) one day be. I know your genius and hers so perfectly tally, that you cannot but join in admiring each other."

Although Pope was a man of more than ordinary understanding, yet his abilities were brilliant rather than powerful. He was a gleaner rather than a reaper in the field of thought. In his works he has the grace of fancy, rather than the grandeur of imagination. And he was not brilliant without great labour; so that we can contemplate him with wonder, but without awe, building a poem, and erecting the scaffolding for a theory. We approach and observe. Our eyes are delighted with the dexterity and elaborateness of the workmanship; and we feel with greater force, how necessary to the display of even the finest abilities is the groundwork of labour and perseverance.

It has often been remarked, that genius is of no country. This is only true of the genius of the *soul*: and this nobler moral genius is also of no age, for it rises as much above the feelings and the prejudices of time as of place. There is also the genius, subtle in its movements, which permeates all nature, mysteriously vivifying what is lifeless, and irradiating whatever is gloomy. But these, though not incompatible, are distinct; for the latter may be linked even with vice. The most refined sentiments and the most delicate imagery are not indices of the disposition or nature of the mind from which they emanate. He who is of the most vicious habits, may be of all the most gifted. He causes them to glow with artificial warmth from his intellect, but they find a sepulchre in his heart.

From a candid review of his life, it may be concluded, without injustice, that Pope's genius had more of the latter than the former character. And in his works, he indeed displays the lustre of epithet, but not the earnestness or generosity of truth—the harmony of numbers, but not that dignity which can be well supported only by true greatness, and in which only it is becoming. If he had been capable of such feelings, he would have given a different temper to his wit, and veiled much of his satire. This was the case with Cowper, who had much of Pope's peculiar ability, but was imbued with more soul. It is to be regretted that vanity should enter so largely into men's motives—that even the satirist should too plainly show, while he prunes the world of its follies, that he is anxious only to exhibit the sharpness and brilliancy of his weapon.

## A HINT TO PUBLIC SPEAKERS,

OR SOMETHING FOR PARLIAMENT TIME.

COMPRISING THE SYSTEM OF THE JESUITS.

BY MYLES GERALD KEON, ESQ.

"He who hath bent him o'er" the lifeless scene that is occasionally exhibited in either House of Parliament, and especially the higher one, must have some time or other said to himself,—that surely a certain influence might be gained, and a certain ascendancy achieved, where at present mediocrity and insignificance are the orator's reward, by one half the ingenuity which the honourable members spend in arranging their turns-out, or cajoling their constituents, if that ingenuity were addressed to the acquisition of eloquence. And to an ardent, youthful mind, it must indeed be a seducing thing to reflect, that although not born to power or authority, yet power and authority are not beyond his reach.

*The orator has both.* His homages are paid him too, as an elegant writer has remarked, in a manner more calculated to console his past labours, to cheer his spirits at the moment, and to inspire his future hopes with honourable anticipations, than are the homages of any other successful aspirant, in any other line whatever, throughout any portion of the habitable world. For *there* they are before him—the bending thousands! He has seen the change come upon them while yet he speaks. Opposition has melted into indifference; indifference has kindled into a gradual prepossession; and prepossession itself has finally swelled into that rapturous enthusiasm of which *he, he himself*, is the object. And, then, it is *his* own work too; neither ancestry, nor station, nor authority—nothing but *mind*, and *mind alone*, has crowned him with his talismanic empire.

While the author, the artist, the inventor, and all other claimants of reputation, receive their praises behind their backs, the orator alone has his task and his triumph all in one; for him alone is the intoxicating pleasure reserved of seeing the very breath that leaves his lips work before his eyes an all but talismanic operation; and it may be *truly*, as it often *has* been *confidently*, said, that what kings and commanders do by authority and injunction, *he* effects as well by art and by persuasion. At the moment he is, indeed, a commander and a king. The difference between him and them is not in the *degree* of their power, but in its mode of exhibition. The one does by force what the other equally does by skill: the one depends on adventitious circumstances, station, hereditary and power; the other *leans* on the inherent right and the essential prerogative of *mind alone*: the one surrounds himself with a compulsory dominion, while a voluntary empire gathers round the other. And the ascendancy of the orator follows him into the salon and the drawing-room too, and very often happier, if less brilliant, triumphs are procured by him under the merry palaces of Love, than under the gorgeous and shadowy temples of Ambition; for there is a conversational as well as a declamatory kind

of oratory. Madame de Staël is an example of the one—while Canning furnishes an illustrious instance of the other.

It is a valuable mystery, this of persuasion; and not so difficult of acquisition as some are unthinkingly predisposed to take for granted. I shall now offer a few simple and I hope useful hints upon the subject; and if I naturally begin with the graver and more aspiring kinds of oratory which a public assembly demands, I shall at least not *stop* there, but go on to that quieter, though often just as sterling and successful, eloquence, that figures in domestic life. For I am half inclined to believe (and the thought is more, I hope, of an *originality* than a *paradox*), that many a high-minded and spirited young fellow would have avoided the blight that has fallen on his affections, if he had possessed the witchery of a subtler tongue.

In the first place, I must remark, that I speak at present solely of the art, *by which we are enabled to induce others by dint of words to do something*.

There are, I am sensible, other significations of the word Rhetoric,—but no other for me! He, then, who seeks, in this acceptance of the term, to become a perfect orator, must first reflect with me, “how men may be influenced to take any given step.” To the elucidation of this rather philosophical point, all the following observations shall be addressed; and whether it be a senator or a lover, a spendthrift nephew, or a dunned and despairing debtor, who seeks in my page a key for his intricate affairs, I hope, with an assured but not an arrogant feeling, that I shall be able to give it to him.

To begin, then, with PUBLIC speaking. All possible cases in which one might find it useful to turn to his rhetorical art for assistance are assuredly reduced to two. On the one hand, he either believes the measure which he advocates to be the best of all suggested courses, or on the other, he secretly thinks it inferior to some opposite proposal. For both these alternatives I am now to propose a method that, morally speaking, will be found infallible. I must just premise, however, that by the term *best measure*, I simply mean the *attractive* measure, whether its attraction spring from its justice or from its natural allurements. Let this be borne in mind.

Now, then, I come to the first of the two alternatives. The orator believes his own measure to be really the best one—that is, the eligible, the attractive one. Of course, the audience think differently;—or where would be the use of addressing them? What then should he do?—*turn to his own heart*. In that little temple, a brief investigation will discover to him, whether it be owing to his own peculiar circumstances or position, that he thinks the measure in question the most eligible. If it *be* thus owing, then I shall reckon him, for the present, in the second, and not the first of the two alternatives.

But if, on the other hand, this measure has appeared the best to him,—not as such a *particular*, and perhaps *eccentric* individual, but as an ordinary member of the community,—then it clearly follows, that if that community can only be brought to view the matter as *he* did while forming his opinion, they will be willing to *adopt* the measure as *he would do*, after his opinion was formed. This reasoning is perfectly logical and correct, and (what is far more to the purpose) it is



founded on the plainest principles of human nature. How then shall they be brought to view the matter as he has done? That follows simply. In the first place, let him put thoroughly out of his head those absurd and unprofitable puzzles—the tropes and the turns, the figures, the rules, and the regulations of artificial rhetoric. Once more let me carry *my* disciple to his own heart. On this second contemplation, he will either find his former impression of the measure confirmed, or he will discover in it some covert flaw, and nearly invisible difficulty. If the first be true—so much the better. But if the second—then he should reflect on this,—that his first view of the subject, though now discovered to be incorrect, was yet *once* such as to satisfy *him*. Now he is certainly not below the common standard of his audience in intellect. At the worst, he is *ordinarily* intelligent. Therefore, his first view of the subject will convince the great bulk and majority of his hearers!! What then should he do? he should analyze his own reflections, and then, while yet warm from the meditation, go to the hustings or the table, and in the language of nature and common sense, give his thoughts to his audience, as they first occurred to himself. How few have ever followed this simple plan: certain as it is simple; easy as it is certain!

Second of the two alternatives.

If the orator secretly believe, that the measure which he advocates, be really inferior in point of eligibility to some opposite proposition, then, let him consider, first, does it so appear to him, because endowed with a more penetrating intellect than others; or *would* it so appear to him, if he had no more than the usual intelligence. If the first be true, he clearly may employ the method already described. But if his favourite measure appear to an ordinary intellect, the less eligible one,—then, indeed, the case is worse, and I have only two counsels to suggest. One is—the orator must make *as if it required great profundity of mind* to see the advantages of his cause, and *to see through its apparent disadvantages*. My next advice, is rather to put my friends in mind, that *now*, IF EVER, is the proper time for sophisms and fallacies, and the whole assemblage of rhetorical artifices. Now is the time to blink the real question, and to start a false one—now is the fit season to hoodwink the hearers and inflame their passions; now should the orator raise dark and mysterious suspicions of his adversary—now should he throw out high and imposing professions; say that he rests his cause upon *principle*—invoke the spirit of *common sense*—rant of *patriotism*—weep over *degeneracy*—point towards *futurity*—and bid men, in making their decision, *think on posterity*; now should he warn them of the importance of *useful*, and the *immedicable ills* of *PERNICIOUS*, *precedents*; and now, if ever, should he infuse into their minds a salutary terror of the day when their judgements must meet, for good or for ill, with an eternal and retributive visitation! Such, and such-like, are the manifold resources of the worsted orator: thus does he throw a glittering shield over the failing cause; and even thus does he sometimes venture to assail the everlasting pillars of the constitution!

The two alternatives, which I have now run rapidly through, comprise, as the reader is aware, the whole round of situations in which

the orator can by possibility be placed. One observation I must now offer relatively to the first-mentioned of these. When a speaker believes his cause to be the best, I have said, that he should give in a manner a history of his own successive reflections to his audience; and that if he does so (being, as he of course *will* be, of an intellect equal to that of the generality of the assembly before him), what has seemed good to *him*, will, *à fortiori*, seem good to *them*! In saying this, however, I do not mean to confine him to a solitary plan of the mind, nor to exclude from his system the factitious aids of general ingenuity. Only let him *first* observe the method I have suggested, and *then*, if he pleases, add whatever adventitious colouring may lie within his reach. I may now, after having thus detailed, in the fewest words, my *theory universal*,—so to speak,—I may now point out some of the general requisites of the orator, descending, as I get forward, to the more particular. And I have only to premise, that most of the following suggestions will be of more apposite service in covering a *weak cause* than in bearing out a *strong* one.

The first requisite for eloquence is *action*. “Impudence is to the rest of mankind, of the same use which action is to orators;” and it so chances, moreover, that impudence is the greatest imaginable requisite for the acquisition of action. A certain deficiency of assurance, a certain absurd and pernicious *mauvaise honte*, is the first obstacle that young speakers break their shins against, to use an expression of Lord Bolingbroke’s, in endeavouring to reach an effective style of action. Next comes, after assurance, among the means of acquiring a proper delivery, the habit of observing how well-bred people deport themselves in the various conversations of the day. This habit has been of more service than all the artificial elegancies of the most elaborate system of elocution. A clever and observant disposition will often, amid the laughter and confusion of society, cull a lesson destined to procure for him, in later trying scenes, when the gaze of a million is upon him, the most dazzling and ambitious triumphs of the orator. The little turns, strokes, and modes of expression, which produce the greatest effect in *conversation*, have *their counterparts in public speaking*. The glance of an eye, the raising of an eye-brow,—it is only the superficial who neglect these apparent trifles; and the more deeply we investigate that famous apothegm of Demosthenes,—“*action, action, action*,”—the more profound and incontrovertible does it appear! When, too, any thing *gauche* or silly has been uttered in conversation, the *CAUSES* of these qualities in the expression should be deeply fathomed; for the orator (and here the diplomatist might join him) will find in the blunders of disagreeable talkers, abundant material for profitable meditation. And the reason is, that the knowledge of these causes of the *disagreeable* will not only prevent the recurrence of such mistakes, on the part of him who has considered them, but will frequently start him, besides, on the most important discoveries of the *agreeable* in the opposite direction. So much for delivery, which has been well considered the better half of eloquence !!

Next comes, if not first in *dignity*, first, at least, in the *order of time*, as no other can be developed without it—the requisite of a ready

and appropriate *fund of language*. Language is the dress of one's thoughts; and as the noblest character would suffer sadly in the eyes even of his dearest friends, were he to appear in rags before them; so the most distinguished conception will not receive a due deference, if the expressions in which it is *dressed* be poor and mean, or tawdry and undignified. This requires no elucidation. Lord Bacon has, I think, given the best counsel for acquiring a proficiency in words. "Reading," says his lordship, in his quaint but profound manner, "maketh a full man, writing an exact man, and conversation a ready man." Conversation alone, if assiduously cultivated (as it is, for example, in the celebrated *soirées* of Paris), will impart *readiness* of words; but without reading, those words will be low and recurrent, because *few*; and without writing, they will fall into a slovenly and inaccurate application. This is a very important qualification; and no matter how noble or imposing a speaker's conceptions may intrinsically be, if they are ill-dressed in language, they will be only like so many Apollos clad in rags and tatters, adding incongruity to squalor and unsightliness.

The next point to be attended to is the study of logic. To be a passable logician is perfectly indispensable; to be a master in the art of disputation is a great additional advantage. After this attainment, the most material consideration is *select reading*. I am no warm advocate of promiscuous reading. One need not read *promiscuously*; one ought to read MUCH. Bolingbroke is a magnificent author for those who think they have within them the power of scaling the more lofty and difficult heights of eloquence. *He* stands upon the proudest of them. Brougham is somewhat in the same line; but while the feeling with which the latter fills you is more active and stirring, as it were, it is less *majestic* and *sublime* than the sentiments excited by the former. Canning is keen and polished to the highest degree—but generally cold and uninspiring. A subtle intellect might profit well from *him*—but an ardent imagination would scarcely feel Canning's image stamped so warmly upon his soul as that of Brougham and Bolingbroke. And this is no small point: an inferior author might even be more useful from being more *colouring*—more *contagious* than a better one, who leaves you as he found you. No one could read Brougham, or Bolingbroke, and not feel his style—when he afterwards sat down to write, *quasi cantu colorari*—coloured as if by incantation. Canning's eloquence is like a bright and delicate rapier of Toledo steel: Brougham's is like a bar of iron: and Bolingbroke's like a broad, and glittering, and descending falchion. One advice more with regard to your reading: fill not your mind, waste not your intelligence, corrupt not your taste, by the trashy, and maudlin, and moonstruck compositions with which young ladies and gentlemen have thought proper of late years to deluge the public. It was not in that school Brougham was formed—nor Canning—nor Bolingbroke—nor Lyndhurst—nor Chatham—nor Fox—nor Sheridan—nor Peel—nor Whittle Hervey. But in place of these writings, there is a source that might be substituted, and from which many a pure inspiration might be drawn,—a source which Addison has praised—which has improved since *his* day—and which the greatest geniuses



of our land have drunk at,—*the national songs and melodies of Great Britain*. There are two principal divisions of oratory, which may be denominated, on the one hand, the “address to the passions,” on the other the “address to the understanding.” Upon the first of these, I shall only say that a person should make it a point, who desires to succeed in public speaking, *to study human nature!* All addresses to the passions presuppose in him who makes them the nicest tact, a pathetic turn of mind, a sensitive heart, and *yet a cool head*. So much for addresses to the passions, which some have endeavoured to make rules for, but which I am convinced are incapable of being brought under any general arrangement. One important counsel, however, I shall suggest; it is not the *pathetic passions*, so to speak, which ought chiefly to be addressed. The best of all is *vanity*.—“Gentlemen of the jury,—Destiny is in your hands; the very air you breathe is death and life. Oh, we admit your power—you *need not, then, exert it angrily*, that we may feel it.” Next after vanity, the best is *pride*. The offspring of pride are—enthusiasm, patriotism, (or a love of those with whom you are *yourself* identified) admiration, and the rest. So much, then, for addresses to the passions.

With regard to “addresses to the understanding,” *they* must, of course, consist in arguments. Arguments may be regarded in a double point of view; as *discoverable*—as *arrangeable*. On the *discovery* of arguments I have nothing to offer but an advice, to *think!* As to their *arrangement*, LET THE MOST OBVIOUS *come first*; for if at the commencement you leave out these, to mention some uncommon ones, your silly auditors, generally speaking, instead of attending to what you say, occupy themselves in thinking how *they* would not have overlooked such and such a thing. This will set them in a passion with your seeming stupidity, and greatly prejudice your cause. After the most obvious, *then* bring forward whatever you please—provided *you close* with the TEST!

When you are resolving difficulties, and one or more of them are really insuperable, I propose the following method as feasible. Leave out *one* extremely obvious difficulty, and proceed forthwith to encounter the rest. Presently, your hearers begin to get irritated. They *rivet* attention on that point which you seem purposely avoiding. Meantime, the arguments with which you are encountering the other difficulties, though, perhaps, in reality, quite inadequate, are now quite sufficient. For all you say is greeted with this tacit mental answer from each one of the assembly:—“Well, blockhead! what of all that? We grant all that: and yet you gain nothing! we give up all that! What is *all that* to the purpose? Why, we know *that* already.” Thus you get swimmingly over the insuperable difficulties (whatever they are); and *THEN* (greatly to the delight of your hearers, who think themselves quite judicious) you say, very coolly, that but *one* point remains. All is attention. You state the difficulty fairly and well. All is satisfaction. You confute it eloquently; and before you sit down, your ears are filled with “nine times nine for the honourable gentleman! Did ever any one handle a subject so comprehensively? rather *tedious*, to be sure, but very *solid*.”

With regard to the particular part of your address in which diffi-

culties should be cleared up, that must *depend* on circumstances. If there are very strong prejudices setting against your cause, it might be as well to endeavour to turn the tide, before entering on your own statement. If the difficulties be light and trivial, it might be a means of giving them undue importance to mention them too soon : and in that case, the conclusion of the confirmation is the proper place. One most important advice is, never mis-state an adversary's argument ; but, *if anything*, rather lend it additional strength and poignancy. This delights your auditors, and throws around yourself a certain air of chivalry. Nothing can be more impolitic than the opposite course ; and no matter how well you refute the point, it will always seem as if you had been combating not *that*, but *some other argument*. You are regarded, besides, by the impatient and jealous assembly, as an unmanly trickster !!

How should a person in debate get up to answer an adversary ? I have already said that the particular time for refuting objections must depend on circumstances. But whether you mean to do this at the beginning, the middle, or the end,—whichever of these three cases shall happen to press at the precise moment,—you should *always*, AT THE VERY OUTSET, inform your hearers that you are SURPRISED with what has just been said. “Do the gentlemen think they have told us any thing *new* ?” This is the tone of easy superiority which you should assume. You may even (and there is no calculating the effect)—you may even begin *excusing* your adversaries for the meagre statement they have proffered : and remind the hearers not to judge too severely of the gentlemen's ingenuity, as their cause, to be sure, was a hard one. This should be the invariable *tone* of your introduction : of course, the words should *not* be invariable. One other advantage of this practice is, that you can never be at a loss how to *begin*—no trifling matter. I may add, as Blair has said before me, that a good general character is one of the first requisites of the orator, lending, as it does, a certain gravity and weight to all he says. One word more : as first impressions are the most striking, the first word of your harangue should be particularly careful of not stumbling against any of the prejudices of your audience. Therefore, there is not in the whole round of the language, a word that can be used with such small apprehension, at the opening of a speech, as that inoffensive one—“*perhaps*.” For there is no proposition which would, by any one, be rejected, when qualified by that humble and unasserting adverb.

In a drawing-room, many great benefits will be found from the habit of talking elegantly and correctly. And it would, indeed, be only the *symptom*, the *token*, the *proof* of extensive necessary influence, to have it said with truth, that *your* words, like Lord Bolingbroke's, would bear the press without correction. One remark, or rather counsel, I shall close with : always have some standing joke, some conventional sentiment in a small way,—well known in your circle,—some little by-word, or more vulgarly, but more explicitly, some little *cant-word*, to allude to. I have known a regiment, in which the phrase—“*hang-on*,” was a cant-word, and many a little sentence was rounded off, and many a conversational period finished sprightly and

amusingly, by its assistance. *It sounded like a classic allusion in an author*—and, where there is no stranger present, before whom it would be rude to use an unintelligible expression—these things *are*, and ever will be, the classic allusions of society.

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ODE TO KING LOUIS PHILIPPE.

BY FRANCIS BARHAM, ESQ.

God from his living throne  
Of blinding light look'd on this careworn earth,  
And he beheld a king of royal birth,  
And more than royal nature—who alone,  
Like Hercules, 'gainst frantic millions strove;  
Such is the agonizing enterprise  
Which best befits the invincible sons of Jove,  
The Olympian heroes of the exulting skies.

Monarch of France! I, though a Briton born,  
With most unjealous admiration swell  
Thy praise on the resonant lyre—nor heed the scorn  
Of congregated legions fresh from hell,  
The spawn of unclean devilish croaking things  
Curs'd in the Apocalypse—who now go forth  
To the shuddering East, the West, the South, the North,  
And fill the universe with bickerings.

Monarch of Gallia, thou dost know them well,  
And knowing, hate, and hating, quell.  
God save thee, and protect thy right,  
Making thee triumph—the divinity  
Of kings shall yet resume its might,  
By which all treason and all traitors die.

Hero thou wast, even from thy earliest days,  
Thy youth was crown'd with palms that rarely shade  
The brow of manhood's hardihood. 'Twas thy praise,  
To lead undaunted hearts, and be obey'd  
By armies of the unforgotten brave.  
Valmy and Jemappes—many a well-fought field  
Proclaim thy victories,—there thy laurels wave;  
For thou wert born to conquer, not to yield.  
Yet, gentle in thy triumph, thou didst win  
The chaplet of Humanity—Vendôme  
Bestowed—for thou didst rescue from the din  
Of reeking massacre, the pastor's home,  
And from the whelming wave, its victim. Still  
The pitiless fates pursued thee. On the side  
Of the wild Alps, and by the freezing rill,  
Child of the avalanche—misfortune tried



Him she subdued not. Then in new disguise,  
She sought to break thy fortitude, and by  
The toils of learning blast thy energies.  
Lo where the exiled Prince, all fervently,  
At Reichenau finds solace in thy charms,  
Philosophy, and in the studious cares  
Of written truth, forgets the loud alarms,  
That ring from the harsh world and all its snares.

Too short thy hours of peace—The Furies urge  
Thee forth again. Far in the barbarous lands,  
Girt by the monster-teeming northern surge,  
They drove thee. There the reindeer silent stands  
By the light sledge, which swift as a hurricane  
Wafts the furr'd Laplander to his steaming feast  
Of oils and blubbers. In his dreams again,  
He slays the throttling bear, and in the yeast  
Of the frothy sea noozes the unwary seal.  
Such were the fierce extremes of perilous doom,  
Wherein, O king, thy heart hath learnt to feel  
All human sympathies, of joy or gloom.

Thy steps have traversed Italy—thou hast seen  
The yoke of grinding superstition laid  
On the necks of Roma's sons, who once, I ween,  
Were noblest of the noble; till the trade  
Of priestcraft flourish'd, and all else decay'd.

In Spain, the realm of bloodiest tyranny,  
Thy heart hath wept to see how very low  
Mankind can sink when, to itself a foe,  
It knows not how to live, nor how to die.

But in our glorious England thou didst find  
A home worthy thy love; and not forgot,  
Amid the pomp which fortune, now more kind  
For old unkindness, flings around thy lot.

And on the Transatlantic shores thy eyes  
Open'd to freedom's vision, when alone.  
On the careering Mississippi, cries  
Of freedom greeted thee; and the deep tone  
That old Niagara thunders to the skies  
Spoke to thy heart a truth too seldom known.

Happy (says Plato) is the land whose prince  
Is a philosopher;—happy would be  
France, if her happiness she knew; but since  
Her bedlams are broke loose, all's anarchy.

Fear not their rage—monarchs have charmed lives,  
Invulnerable to rebellious unblest'd bands.  
The blow the assassin at thy bosom drives  
Is foil'd, recoiling on his murderous hands.

Nay, fear them not—true courage boldlier fronts  
 The deadlier danger—strengthens with the blast  
 Which it encounters. Let no Jacobin vaunts  
 Lead thee to abdicate. Nail to the mast  
 The colours of thy high prerogative,  
 And teach thy suicide people how to live.  
 For what is *abdication* but the trick,  
 The coward trick, of those who want the head  
 Or heart to deal with that arch lunatic,  
 A nation quarreling with its daily bread?

Blessed be thou, O king—God ever smiles  
 On peace and peacemakers. Thou hast maintain'd  
 The peace of Europe when the insensate wiles  
 Of money-mongering factionaries strain'd  
 To embroil our twin-born brother empires.  
 Never be they divided—they were made  
 For godlike harmony—their best desires  
 Link each to each. Let love's law be obey'd  
 By France and England. Let them be allied,  
 Like fabled Castor and Pollux, side by side,  
 Conquering, and still to conquer. But if hate,  
 Which ever errs, for trifles light as air  
 Part them—even from that hour will sages date  
 The fall of each. They are a plighted pair—  
 Plighted by God and nature—and what they  
 Have join'd together, let no impious hand  
 Dare separate, for in the fatal day  
 They are dissever'd each shall fall from its command.

And thou, my Guizot, whose philanthropy  
 Taught me to love thee, and instruct my race  
 In thy benignant and bland policy,  
 Mayst thou, rejoicing in thy monarch's grace,  
 Strengthen the peace he loves. The peace that decks  
 The fields with yellow Ceres—peace that spreads  
 Ripe clusters o'er the vine, and clothes the necks  
 Of labouring steers with flowers, and crowns the heads  
 And hearts of men with joyfulness—the peace  
 That lulls the alarms of battle, and sends the spear  
 And sword to rust in armouries, when cease  
 The storms of strife, and wiped is every tear.

But if in spite of all that bard or sage  
 Can plead for peace, that peace be broken now,  
 Cursed be them that break it—by the age  
 They shall make dreadful—Heaven shall hear my vow,  
 And echo back in thunder,—“Let their blood  
 Be on their own hands!” Whoso first draws forth  
 The sword, shall perish in the infernal feud,  
 That Hell prepares, to blast the south and north.

## CRITIQUE UPON A NEWLY DISCOVERED EPIC.

"They all went down the garden to cut cabbages to make an apple-pie. A great she-bear ran through the village. What, no soap? So he died! And she very imprudently married the barber. There were present the Jamma-ninnies, the Pic-a-ninnies, the Dooboobies, and the Great Ram Jam Nam himself. With a little round button at the top. They all set to playing catch who can, till the gunpowder ran out of the heels of their boots."

I FEEL perfectly justified in denominating this master-piece of human intellect a poem, supported, as I am, by the authority of the German critics, whose intense acumen has lately discovered that prose is the same as poetry.

The first effect of the exordium of this justly celebrated epic is one of surprise and admiration. I know not whether most to approve the boldness of the conception or the delicacy of the execution. If Pope "lisped in numbers," this exordium has a similar merit; it introduces us immediately to numbers of its own, pictured by the emphatic pronoun plural, "*They* all went down the garden." Yet, with this imposing march, how simple is the tone of the narrative, "*They* all went down the garden."

There is a feature in this incomparable work which compels unqualified admiration. The Hebrew language has always been justly revered for beginning at the end and coming to a conclusion at the beginning; but, how much more worthy of reverence is a poem which, to the unthinking mind, presents but a series of disjointed phrases, apparently of no further utility than to assist the expanding memory, but which, in reality, discloses a tale of deep interest, so skilfully contrived, that the catastrophe is hidden until it is discovered.

Although I have used the term exordium, far be it from my wish, that it should be confounded with the inflated, vapid, or impertinent fronts of all other poems. Its majestic simplicity is only equalled by its intense truth and vigour, "*They* all went down the garden."

Having ventured to stigmatize the idols of a world, it may perhaps be expected that I should substantiate my accusations. Virgil, no mean authority, with the corrupt partisans of a more corrupt school, begins his best work with the following bombastic burst, "Arms and the man I sing." Does it not strike even the ordinary observer that, independent of the roughness of the phrase, especially in the original Latin, it is against all the canons of poetical taste to allow a man's arms to be seen before he is himself introduced—the lesser to take precedence of the greater; an error arising from a pusillanimous reliance on alphabetical correctness, the timid poet being evidently afraid of placing the letter *M*, in man, before its progenitor *A*, in arms.

Even our own popular poet, Milton, in his very long poem of the "*Paradise Lost*," has been guilty of a violent error. There is a vital theological mistake and wilful misrepresentation in the opening paragraph (which is too long for insertion entire), "Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit;" since it is satisfactorily proved, that it was the disobedience of the wife, and not that of the husband. Had not the poet been unfortunately ruled by *his* wife, he would doubtless have



penned the truth, and the line would have read more harmoniously thus: "Of woman's disobedience, and the fruit;" the word "first" being omitted, not only for the sake of measure, but from the impossibility of ascertaining amidst woman's numerous disobediences which was actually the first.

Let us turn to a poet of a different character, Thomson. He opens his "Seasons" with a lamentable want of courage, and a paucity of imagination. "Come, gentle Spring?" A timid and commonplace invocation. Instead of leading forth the beauteous maiden with determined gallantry, he degrades himself by a call which may not be responded to. In another of the same poet's works we find the following inappropriate picture: "As on the sea-beat shore Britannia sat." Now, I will venture to ask my impartial reader, whether that is a fitting reception for a lady. And what lady? No less a personage than the grandmother of England! To be left squatting like a common sailor's weather-beaten wife on the wet slimy shore. Fie! Jemmy Thomson, fie! These are not the manners of a genuine poet. The idea wants dignity, and the lady—a seat.

Even Gray's celebrated "Elegy" is equally defective. The very first image is untrue and unpleasant. "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day." Now, it is well known that a knell is a death peal, and it is consequently inappropriately introduced here, since day is only parting for the time being, and not actually departed for good.

But what shall we say when we find the mighty Homer tripping in company with his less illustrious compeers. Even the "Iliad" is unable to compete with the sublime simplicity of "They all went down the garden." Let us turn from this exquisite line to "Achilles' wrath," "heavenly goddess, sing." Now it stands to reason that the vulgar wrath of a Grecian man-butcher is an unfit theme for the poetic Muse, and particularly to occupy twenty-four books; and it also betrays a lamentable want of delicacy to request a "heavenly goddess" to sing so improper a song.

In the "Odyssey" we find a still greater contempt for etiquette. Without any palliative expression we light upon "The man for wisdom's various arts renowned." It is clear in the face of this unprovoked rudeness, that if, indeed, a person be renowned for such admirable qualities, he is decidedly deserving of the appellation of a gentleman. In the poem of "Lycidas," we find that even in the first line the poet halts for want of words, being obliged to repeat two very insignificant monosyllables to make up the quantity. "Yet once more, O ye laurels! and once more!" Is any such repetition to be found in the illustrious poem before us. Is there any paucity of syllabic extension—any undue dwelling upon trifling sounds. No! triumphantly, No! we exclaim in rapture!

I will bring forward but one more instance of the general depravity of the pseudo-poets; it is one where the malevolence of political irritation has annulled the gentle enthusiasm of poetical refinement. In the "Allegro" of Milton we discover the rough, uncompromising tone of domineering republicanism—even as it were the fatal leaven of democratic virulence escaping in the uncongenial channels of poetry. He opens it with a violent attack upon a feeling, which is, neverthe-

less, decidedly *constitutional*, namely, "Melancholy," and, as though it were not enough to suffer by the law of Nature, without any Christian-like attempt to soothe misfortune, the subject of the poem is thus brutally dismissed; "Hence, loathed melancholy." However, let us advance towards the end I propose, which is the beginning of the poem in question.

"They all went down the garden to cut cabbages to make an apple-pie." We have in this exordium a daring picture of numbers and vastness—the number of agents implied by "they," and further enhanced by the categorical component "all," and the idea of vastness admirably conveyed by the plural "cabbages," as implicated in the peculiar use to which they were to be put. "They *all* went down the garden." What a swelling image! The earth was desolate! The poem, by opening at this later period of the history, affords no intimation of the important event which had caused them *all* to go down the garden; and so far to depart from the principles of Nature and of pie-making, as to substitute cabbages for apples. There must, it is evident, have been some substantial reason for so strange a mode of proceeding, and we cannot help admiring the skill of the poet in thus exciting our curiosity, without in the least attempting to satisfy it. He preserves a noble silence on the subject.

What admirable pictures are presented to the mind by this inestimable line: in the distance we behold the forlorn house looking through its deserted casements, and listlessly gaping through its neglected portal, presenting the affecting incident of a house turned out of doors. Undulating near it we behold the once smooth gravel path, now indented with hosts of hurrying feet; its fair surface no longer a ball-room for the sun's rays to gambol upon; the kenneled cur suspiciously peering from his gable asylum; the agitated cat, with a swollen tail, and a back raised like a bridge (over which a mouse might travel without dreaming that its *arch* enemy was underneath). Behold, also, the scene of devastation! In a fertile spot, near to the stable-door, might probably be the once favoured apple-tree. The expectant emblem of original sin leaped to the morning breeze; its very pips tremble with emotion at the prospect of being coveted, and then cut by its acquaintance; when, lo! *all* who came down the garden, turn, perhaps, a little to the left, where, though near the meridian, they find the lazy cabbage still in bed. Had it not been for fear of amplification, the poet would doubtless have favoured us with the surprise of the apple-tree, and the pathetic appeal of the menaced cabbage, with the modest intimation of the latter, of its not being exactly suited to the honourable occupation for which it was designed—namely, that of being made into an apple-pie. We should doubtless have beheld the sly shrugs and winks of "all those who came down the garden," mysteriously alluding to the important circumstance (with which we are already acquainted, but about which we know nothing); we should also have read of the feats of arms in dragging forth the cabbages, and we should doubtless have had a detailed account of the machinery by which these pro-temporaneous apples were conveyed to the pie-making apartment.

Let us now proceed to the next line, a singular one it must be con-

fessed, since it relates to a single bear—"And a great she-bear ran through the village."—At such a moment, an event of this nature must have been of the utmost importance. The fact is announced by the poet with a simplicity which enhances the natural solemnity of the idea. Besides the philosophical nomenclature of the animal in question, two other important facts in natural history are mentioned, the word *great* presenting a fearful indication of its size, while the more delicate monosyllable *she* conveys a delicate allusion to its sex. This triplicate delineation displays all the raciness of Homer, without his pomposity of diction. It presents even to the least educated a pleasing and faithful image of an animal, who is, it must be confessed, notwithstanding its anomalous situation in a peaceable English village, (rearing, perhaps, like a savage on his hind legs, to the terror of old men and young girls, and other domestic beasts playing quietly together in the sun,) is, nevertheless, an object of a certain sort of beauty, of a certain sort of utility, and of a decidedly uncertain temper. It must be observed, with reference to this event, that the poet has, with due tact, avoided the distressing circumstance of the animal leisurely stalking through the village, committing impertinences right and left, by one highly descriptive monosyllable, "the bear *ran* through the village;" by which skilful manœuvre getting out of the dilemma as quickly as possible. This is, indeed, the triumph of poetry. While the vulgar, old Greek indulges in sickening pictures of fearful butchery, detailing with infinite *gusto* the varied modes of violent death, it is delightful to turn to the pages of a poet who has the talent to introduce "a great she-bear" into an English village without forfeiture of gentlemanly feeling, or poetical beauty. The third verse, which is of three feet, chimes in admirably with the commanding Alexandrines which precede it. It pleases by its somewhat startling effect. It is evidently a lightning-flash of inspiration!—"What! no soap?"—This is evidently the question of a pure mind! Whether in sorrow or in anger, has never yet been decided by commentators. I incline to neither of these interpretations, but am induced to believe, that it implies a custom founded on an old proverb which recommends us "to catch a bear and wash him." Now this evidently announces an intention of trying the soothing system with the animal, already mentioned—a system more likely to succeed than one which should offend the known prejudices of the bear. As in a philosophical poem every portion of it should be the exponent of a foregone conclusion; it is our duty to view this delightful agent in this truly fascinating tale, as something more than a smiling type of purity. If it really refer to the bear, as indeed there can be no doubt (although the agents in the cabbage-apple scheme might require its aid likewise), it must undoubtedly be based upon that admirable axiom in natural philosophy, that by placing a given quantity of salt on a given bird's tail, he stands a chance of becoming a captive. In the light in which the poet has regarded the application of the soap to the bear, he displays as admirable a *ruse de guerre*, as is to be met with in military annals; for under pretence of soaping the bear's tail—to which she could have no objection, it being rather a pleasant operation—it were easy to replace the cord from which it had so unceremoniously broken loose. There yet remains another mode



by which to judge of the application of this splendid poetical burst. In imitation of the Latin poets, our author may, in order to produce variety, have placed one portion of a paragraph before another, and thus have introduced the substantive soap (what the French call a *nom propre*), before the distinctive substantive *barber*, to which it may naturally be supposed to refer. It may not be irrelevant to suggest, that a delicate insinuation is conveyed by the apparent misplacing of the two nouns, founded on deep professional knowledge, since all must perceive that a barber is nothing without his soap; from which it would appear that the soap ought to have precedence of the barber. —“So he died!”—A concise and pathetic passage! Some few critics have given it as their opinion, that this melancholy exclamation should be understood in the straight-forward common sense way; while others assert, with considerable warmth, that all ordinary acceptations should be scrupulously avoided by commentators. That huge authority, Dr. Johnson, asserts unequivocally that an irrelative phrase is an isolated postulate, referable to no rule, and explanatory of no contingencies. It were unjust, however, to consider in this light any portion of this exquisitely varied poem.

The passage in question, undoubtedly conveys a piece of information of decided importance to the plot of this admirably conducted piece, although it may not be sufficiently verbose for obtuse understandings. “And so he died!” A phrase at once noble and pathetic, vying with that choice specimen of Gallic dramatic poetry so justly celebrated for beauty and simplicity—“*Zaire! vous pleurez!*” or that still more exquisite *morceau*—“*Seigneur! adieu!*”

If, however, the emphasis be laid on the word, and *so* he died, we are at once forced into a consideration of the probable manner of his death; and by a judicious contrivance, unknown to many authors, the hero's death is supposed to proceed from some cause, and that cause is only delicately alluded to before the actual demise so faithfully depicted by the words, “he died.” This is a very admirable plan, being evidently derived from an accurate observation of nature, where causes frequently precede effects. If, on the other hand, we lay stress on the word “*he*,” we are led into one of those mazes of imagination, which it is the province of the poet to open unto us. “So *he* died.” The sex of the person is alone mentioned. We have thus a sort of Euclidical proposition to expound, “from a given gender” to determine the longitude of person, and circumference of mind; and by extending the *acute* line of analysis to detect the age, character, and occupation of the postulate. After an attentive study of this interesting poem, I have every reason to believe that this indefinite male, is, or rather was, the husband of the indefinite female, who very imprudently married the barber, as will appear in the sequel. It is to be presumed, that on the principle of “*de mortuis nil nisi bonum*,” the indefinite defunct is simply alluded to by the male pronoun “*he*,” since any more pointed reference might call for unpleasant explanations.

Before we approach the climax, it may be as well to advert to a circumstance in the formation of the human stomach which will materially develop the argument. By the misapplication of any object, a fatal instead of a pleasant effect will be produced: that which serves

an alderman for food would destroy a larger animal—the grease which renders a cart-wheel easy in its circumstances, would operate prejudicially with an infant. Our prophetic eyes are necessarily directed to the opening chapter for the cause of this irremediable evil. Oh! those cabbages! those fearful cabbages! It was to be feared that the novel experiment of substituting cabbages for apples would be productive of some mischance. The danger of the spirit of unconstitutional innovation is nowhere more conspicuous than in this melancholy incident. We little thought, whilst enjoying the animated garden scene, when “they all went down,” that the clouds of death would soon overshadow it. Let us, however, dismiss this painful scene with the discriminating brevity of the poet, “So he died!”

“And she very imprudently married the barber!” The generality of poets would have indulged in an unbecoming strain of indignation at the extraordinary impropriety she committed in marrying the barber. How delicately a due degree of vituperation is here conveyed, “And she very *imprudently* married the barber.” The act is placed midway between a crime and a folly with admirable precision, “*imprudently* married.” How much is implied that does not meet the eye. The information conveyed in the preceding phrase has indeed worn off the keen edge of the “*imprudence*.” “So he died.” A lucky thought, assuredly, for had she married the barber while “he” was alive, she might have been suspected of bigamy. It may strike the unthinking mind, that in this, as in the former instance, the pronoun does not refer with certainty to any acknowledged nominative. This is true: but it is not only of no importance to the tale, but forms one of the chief beauties of the author’s style. I cannot sufficiently admire the taste of the poet, in refraining from bringing before a promiscuous audience the identical person indicated by the feminine pronoun. How modestly has he cast the veil of mystery around the fair object of his vituperation, who, although she might have imprudently demeaned herself with a barber, was still entitled to our pity. She must experience no trifling mortification in being deemed an indefinite member of her sex. The beauty of this poetical concealment is rendered still more apparent, by its being in strict conformity with the established customs of society. Whoever has witnessed an Irish wedding, will doubtless have observed, that the native delicacy of the Emeralds, in order to prevent the detection of a bride on her wedding day, prompts them to render her as comfortably inebriated as her friends and bridesmaids. This is a *spirited* example of poetry in action.

But there is another point to be considered in this portion of the poem. It is but fair to examine the grounds of the serious imputation to which “she” has been subjected, by forming a matrimonial connexion with a person we shall call, *par excellence*, the barber. So long as the laws of society shall demand a conformity with a certain standard of decorum, so long shall we be privileged to scrutinize the actions of our neighbours, when they appear to depart from the authorized criterion of behaviour. The lady and the barber are, then, evidently fair objects of examination. Let us endeavour syllogistically to sift this affair to the bottom. The French assert that, “*un homme*

*qui vous fera la barbe*" is a dangerous companion; this operation is generally performed by a barber, *ergo*, a barber is a dangerous individual; consequently, not a fit object for a tender connexion. Let us, however, in a spirit of impartiality, shape a syllogism in the lady's favour, when we may possibly arrive at a different conclusion.

Love is instinctive and a leveller of conditions—therefore, no woman can be blamed for loving a man in any condition; *ergo*, this mysterious "*she*" did very right to marry *the* barber.

"There were present the Jamma-ninnies, the Pic-a-ninnies, the Dooboobies, and the Great Ram Jam Nam himself."—Although this important event might justify my selection of it for the first paragraph, still I discard the worldly claims of rank and fashion, to do homage to the unequalled skill and heraldic knowledge of our delightful poet. Messrs. Debrett and Burke, adhering to the slavish customs of our ancestors, in enumerating the steps of the social ladder, by a ludicrous anomaly, begin—like the Dutch in building their houses—at the top, and place the first stone last. The monarch is arrived at before the knight—Jupiter before Pan. But our author, with discriminative skill, leads us gradually from the base to the apex of the pyramid, instead of forcing the cloud-capped apex to serve as a pivot to the grosser basis. The least of these noble personages are first ushered in—with solemnity, it is true—but with an evident reservation of enthusiasm for the Great Ram Jam himself, who is wisely kept as a *bonne bouche*; for who, having once bathed his fancy in the glories of that exalted personage, could descend even to descry a comparatively insignificant "*Pic-a-ninny*;" who, for instance, could devote a moment's thought to the proud bearing of the city marshal, or the full-faced majesty of the sedate sword-bearer, when the splendour of the one-year monarch—the civic Solomon—bursts upon the astonished sense. To place a monarch or a mayor as the first of men, displays at once an ignorance of their capacities, and of the credit due to station. It must be confessed that, considering the humble rank of the persons whose nuptials were celebrated, a numerous and distinguished company honoured them with their presence and countenances. It cannot be supposed that they were friends of the barber; it is, therefore, evident that, as they would not intrude without being invited, they must have been known to the lady. Her name and rank are hidden, and this leads us into a further contemplation of the probability of her being "*a distinguished personage*," contracting a left-handed or awkward alliance.

Divesting the Ninnies and Boobies of their distinguishing titles, we are forced to class them together, although it is supposed, from the vast increase of this ubiquitous family, that many nobles are ashamed to find their honours shared by the lowest in rank, while these latter are somewhat envious of the superiority of the greater ninnies. In the course of time it is supposed that, by the short-sighted practices of the noble ninnies, they will force their humble relatives to cast off the yoke, and prove, by regulating their own affairs, that they are quite as sufficient ninnies as their former lords. The boobies are generally more sedate in manner than the ninnies, who are a loquacious set; the former shine in legislative assemblies, by advancing argu-



ments founded on the exclamation of a sapient lord of the roast and the boiled, who declared that the kitchen chimney would be in a blaze if the soot were removed and fewer coals burnt. The ninnies, on the contrary, are apt to revere the boobies, whose heaviness or weight of manner imposes on these less sententious relations. The ninnies in general are very good listeners to a parish patriot, or clothes-pegs to a fashionable tailor, while the peaceful tide of their untroubled minds renders them admirable tools for experienced boobies. Many of these noble families came over with the Conqueror, although it is attested by contemporaneous historians, that there previously existed in this country a large stock of each of these distinguished clans. The ninnies and boobies zealously adhere to the customs and opinions of their illustrious ancestors, and maintain inviolate the following principles:—always to load a donkey with a greater weight than he can bear, and should he kick, to deprive him of his daily thistle; always to keep their hands warm in other people's pockets, having holes in their own; always to swear conscientiously, that the more a man is in debt, the happier he is; always to educate children in such a way as they should not go; always to look to the church pews as the pillars of the edifice, and to denounce any attempt at profanely dusting the pulpit or removing cobwebs; and, finally, always to call things by wrong names. The great Ram Jam Nam is himself above the tricks of his ninnies and boobies, but is supposed to nourish a considerable predilection for their modes of thought and action. These illustrious individuals have often the title "great" bestowed upon them, that they may be recognized as such, "and no mistake," notwithstanding untoward appearances. In many instances, it has been doubted whether the possession of a head was of consequence to the race of the Ram Jam Nams; but having been deprived of these appendages occasionally, it is now a settled point, that they are just as useful and rational with heads as they are without.

The high sounding title by which this personage is introduced, may be justly deemed an onomatope, since it conveys, by the grandiloquence of its sound, some feeble notion of the dignity of the individual who bears it. The word Ram is evidently introduced symbolically, since a respectable animal of that name is often known to lead a flock of more timid sheep, being naturally the one in authority over them. It is considered by many critics to be a term peculiarly applicable to despotic monarchs, who are accustomed to *ram* their edicts down the nations' throats. Jam is an expletive, tending to fill up the idea of something important and pleasing. Jam is generally sweet, and sweetness tempers the vigour of power. By an extension of the province of analysis, it may be said to indicate the march or progress of greatness when the spectators are jammed together in hopeless confusion. The most extraordinary piece of ingenuity is, however, displayed by our transcendent poet in the introduction of the last expressive monosyllable, Nam. The sex of the "illustrious individual" is obtained by reversing this admirable piece of Latinity, and yet the poet is spared the opprobrium of indicating that he is a man like the rest of the species, and with great truth makes him the opposite. I find, on referring to the earlier chronicles, that the more refined

people in this country distinguished that once common beverage Gin, as Nig, avoiding the disgrace of naming what they wanted. I am unwilling, however, to suspect that our author would have condescended to be indebted to another for this ingenious thought. It can alone be termed, an extraordinary coincidence.

"With a little round button at the top."—This line is, perhaps, the most exquisite specimen of the author's style, and a brilliant example of his powers of description. While he clothes the idea in his own peculiar language, he does full credit to the taste of the article described: there is nothing in a little round button that would disgrace an emperor of China. At the top of what? we are tempted to exclaim; but a truce to all such trifling, and let us devote that attention which the subject requires. The origin of the words, "little round button," is involved in much obscurity; it is therefore our duty to dispel the mist which prevents our full contemplation of "the little round button" which was at "the top."

We find in the learned folio of Gaudiensis Galantis, that in the reign of Franciscus Friskus the first of France, the fashionable cavaliers wore a small round bonnet, which was aptly denominated "*le petit rond beau-ton*," which, by an easy corruption, may have been rendered into English, as "a little round button."

A far higher authority is to be found in the invaluable researches of Father Blackartibus, who says, in his admirable essay on the resemblance between monks and goats, that the latter animal has curious appurtenances on the top of his head, by which he can turn round and *butt on* being irritated. In the blue and green letter edition, 354mo. of Blundergraft, this text is thus given with a brevity and transposition imitated from the Latin. "Horns when goat *little round butt on the top*, irritated turns." This is a powerful argument in favour of the Abbé Goatier (in French Gaultier), who supposes that when this horned animal strikes a blow on the top of the head, that it produces a "*petit rond bouton*," or swelling.

With all due respect for these learned authorities, I am inclined to give a different version of this important phrase, a version sanctioned by the general tenor of the tale. The barber, doubtless, invited some of his plebeian acquaintances to participate in the nuptial festivities, and without any slight upon their character, it may be fairly stated, that they were very inferior to the illustrious friends of his distinguished bride. The Jamma-ninnies, the Pic-a-ninnies, the Dooboobies, and the great Ram Jam Nam himself were evidently *foils* to their humble associates the friends of the barber, but, with a considerate feeling peculiar to elevated rank, although they felt as foils, to avoid wounding their low-born rivals, they wore a little round button at the top.

"They all set to playing at catch who can."—It is rare to find an author of any standing willing to avail himself of a common image, however pleasing it may be. It bespeaks an intellect of no vulgar order, to retrace one's mental steps to the narrow but pleasing paths of childhood, to gambol amidst nursery rhymes and juvenile proverbs.—"They all set to playing at catch who can."—How sweetly simple! A corrupt mind could not have written thus! How admirable this would appear in the mighty of the land. Fancy "the highest legal authority in

the land," riding on a favourite hobby with open-headed burgesses, just like a good little boy; or, fancy an illustrious Ram condescending, in the exuberant simplicity of his mind, to snip creases out of his voluminous frock. Such condescensions are rare! They bespeak a singleness of perception which few can conceive! In this poem, we behold an extraordinary instance of this quality. A poet of first-rate powers culls an image from the most common of all amusements—"catch who can." It has been wisely ordained, that all should have sense enough to play at this game, which is equally interesting to high and low. Some have strength to climb up the tree and help themselves: others wait beneath with open mouths and expectant eyes, to avail themselves of godsend: others again, armed with "radical saws and modern instances," cut the trunk to get at the branches, which rot and shoot no more. Some have great difficulty in catching, while others are as unsuccessful in keeping what they have caught; but owing to the "perpetual motion" of egotism, all play at catch who can to the best of their ability.

"Till the gunpowder ran out of the heels of their boots." The merciful character of a true poet is discovered by this admirable distinctive narration. Gunpowder is allowed, at all hands, to be the most destructive composition in the world, after Morison's pills and "French polish." Our poet, therefore, reduces it to its proper level, and places it beneath our regards in the very "heels of their boots;" and even then, as though it were not low enough, he makes us anticipate another fall in gunpowder, by causing it to run out from the heels, where it had been ignominiously consigned. In a former age it would not have been suitable to the dignity of a bridal feast to have alluded to the company's boots; but a later age having discovered that "there is nothing like leather," it was resolved to discard the paucity of that material in dress shoes, and display its full proportions in more polished boots. I may here observe that the genuine poet ever displays a knowledge of the forms of *convention*, and like the distinguished author of "Money" (not Plutus, but Bulwer), skilfully adapts his thoughts and words to its omnipotent laws.—"*Ran out of the heels.*"—Can anything be more explicit and lively. It paints admirably the distinctive characteristic of gunpowder—its elasticity and vehemence. A duller compound—hair-powder, for instance—would have sluggishly trailed along the earth. The gunpowder, true to itself, *ran* out, and the poet, true to *his* vocation, recorded the fact of its running out.

It is the custom of most authors to entertain their readers with a thorough-paced catastrophe, just as naturally as a citizen closes his daily earthly career with a supper hot and vast. This mode of proceeding is generally slavishly adhered to. The immortal author of this sublime epic, disdaining the beaten track, rushes into the wilds of originality, armed with the elements of convulsion, which he might have brandished like a Gorgon snake over the heads of his readers, deriving that applause from their fears, which he would fail to extract from their delight. But no; he glories in the moderation of his genius; he holds the arbiter of our destiny,—the awful gunpowder, and when our thoughts are turned to how far we may be borne by its effects, we are agreeably surprised and relieved by finding it running out of



"the heels of their boots." How admirably has he made the powder lie carefully concealed in the nail-encompassed heels of the barber's friends, till, to avoid the expected vulgarity of an explosion, he leads it out by an unforeseen aperture admirably contrived for so picturesque a *denouement*. Not only would the usual desolating *finale* imply too great a predilection for established modes of bringing a tale to a conclusion, but it would in the present instance have been a flagrant and barbarous imitation of that gunpowder hero of ancient days, Guy Vaux, who was guilty of intending to blow up both houses of parliament. (Chroniclers mention a nobleman of the same family, doubtless Lord Vaux, who, in another age, actually did blow up the Lords and Commons, and that to their very faces.) It would then appear that this mode of proceeding is far too common to be adopted by a poet whose originality is only equalled by his fecundity. At one fell swoop to have lost "the Jamma-ninnies, the Pic-a-ninnies, the Dooboobies, and the Great Ram Jam Nam himself," would have plunged the nation in irretrievable misery, leaving it *sans* legislators, *sans* sinecurists, *sans* gold-sticks and silver-sticks, *sans* every thing in fact which can conduce to a nation's welfare. The powder, therefore, very considerably *ran* out at the heels, to avoid the chances of explosion! Honour to the art which can excite emotions instead of fears, and lead us unharmed through the sublime passages of a transcendent epic!

LOPEZ.

## BESSIE.

## A TALE OF PHANTASIES.

BY SELWYN COSWAY, ESQ.

"Come like shadows—so depart!"—SHAKSPERE.

## I.

BRIGHTLY shone the sun into the desolate apartment—gilding its walls with a mockery of splendour. How dreadful is death, when the very room thus seems decked for joyfulness—when the mansion of sorrow is gorgeously arrayed with roseate beams and golden hues—when the types of cheerfulness are present, but she herself has been banished far, far away!

There was a low still breathing heard in the room; it proceeded from *one* hanging over the bed with more than affectionate solicitude. Her sparkling blue eyes flashed *too* brilliantly, and gazed *too* ardently upon the expiring form of her whom she watched. It was her mother!

Bessie, poor Bessie! A strange girl had she ever been—uttering rhapsodies—peopling vacancy—conceiving rare fancies, as beautiful as unreal. Poor Bessie! She had but one passion—and that was LOVE! She had but one object to lavish it upon—and that was her mother. One brother, to be sure, she had, upon whom she would sometimes smile pensively; but she only *loved* her who now was dying—her mother—her protector!

Brightly the sun shone into the desolate apartment; desolate, because the chamber of death. The sun shone upon the face of the

dying, making its paleness still more visible. Bessie advanced with quick thought to the window, to shut out the intruding beams; but the faint voice of her mother thus forbade her: "Shut not out the light of day, my daughter—for it is beautiful!"

Poor Bessie!

## II.

The bell tolls—how mournfully! It steals over the fields, startling the labourer from his labour; while, perhaps, a tear will bedew his rough cheeks, as he recollects the departed, and murmurs, "'Tis a pity!" Toll! toll! toll! How solemn does it fall on the ear of the wayfarer! He stops for a moment to listen, and some one says, "She has gone the way of all living, and the whole village is sorrowful!" The wayfarer travels on with a heavier and a sadder heart! Still does the bell toll, toll, toll!

Ashes to ashes! dust to dust! To die—what is it? To sleep? O no! It is to wake! And O, what a waking is the awakening of the tomb! We rise—we fly—we pierce the curtain of eternity;—we see—we love—we adore! O, what a waking is the awakening of the tomb!

Slowly winding up the narrow path, behold the dark and dismal procession. Tears flow fast—but *one* does not weep; wherefore, none can tell. It is Bessie! Sometimes she smiles sadly—sometimes sweetly. It is her mood—and no one can account for the moods of Bessie!

They have arrived at the humble grave, and the surpliced clergyman impressively reads. All stand around; the words are spoken—"Ashes to ashes! dust to dust!" The moist mould is scattered on the coffin—the tears more swiftly flow!

The ceremonies are concluded—homeward wend the mourners!

## III.

Softly beams the moonlight over the churchyard! Softly does it lighten up the white gravestones—causing them to appear, in the distance, as if they were an army of ghastly spectres. All is silent—not even the whisper of a breeze is heard. All is solitary—the dead are left alone;—"the wicked have ceased from troubling—the weary are at rest!"

Alone! said I? Alone! ah no! One is there whose black garments wave in the moonlight dismally. She speeds along the carefully gravelled path, pausing not. At length she finds the new-made grave, and sits down upon the damp mould.

It is Bessie!

There sits she—leaning her head upon her hands, with upturned eyes, watching the starry heavens. She speaks not—only gazes! She sits upon her mother's grave—but she weeps not, glances not upon it; her thoughts wander among the stars.

She shivered, for the night was very cold!

Another has entered the churchyard—it is her brother! Quickly is he by her side; and looking tenderly up into her face, he speaks:

"Bessie, dear Bessie, come home; the air feels very chill!"

Silently casting her eyes upon him, she motions him to sit by her side. He obeys.

"Thy hand is cold," says he; "why wishest thou, Bessie, to stay here?"

"Speak not," she answers—"speak not! See the moon, she journeys silently. Be still."

"Come, Bessie, they are waiting for you. Have you never seen the moon before?"

"Hush! brother, hush! see you not yon star?"

"Yes, Bessie!"

"I have, brother, been gazing upon that star all night. See you not how bright it is—brighter than all the others?"

"Well, Bessie?"

"When first I sat down, brother, I noticed that star above all the hosts of heaven—and I loved it because it shone so bright. And it beamed kindly upon me, as if it returned my love—and methought it looked brighter than before. Brother, look upon it; I feel that yon bright star is my mother."

As she spoke, her eyes flashed brilliantly; and resting once more her head upon her hands, she gazed upwards at the star.

"Nay, Bessie," exclaims her brother, "give not heed to these fancies. Home with me, Bessie—do come home!"

Taking hold of her hand, he leads her from the spot. She follows passively her brother.

#### IV.

They entered their home.

"Bessie," said her father, "why didst thou leave us? And see thy locks, too, they have fallen about thy ears—come, my dear, recollect yourself!"

"My locks!" exclaimed Bessie; "ah, they are black and bony! Once I thought they were silken, glossy, and soft to the touch; but alas! now they are black and bony!"

"See, Bessie, we have saved thee thy supper—eat, and thou wilt be better!"

"Better, father? When I am in the tomb, then shall I be better,—not before. Ah! the dead lead the merriest life—ours is all sorrow! sorrow! sorrow!"

"Eat, Bessie!"

"Eat—not now, father—wait till my mother comes home. Do we not always so? Oh, father, I have been conversing with my mother in the churchyard—she was kind as heretofore."

"Bessie, you require rest—go to bed—there do!"

"Rest! my mother rests. She lies very quietly in the grave. She complained not, father. I promised to return to her soon—let me hence or she will chide me!"

She rushed from the cottage.

#### V.

The stream murmured mournfully, as it welled along its pebbly bed. She sat on the green bank, and watched the inverted moon seen in the limpid waves.



"Falsehood, all is falsehood!" muttered she; "even the very streams tell lies. Would'st make me believe that yon moon is thine? that thou canst emulate the canopy of heaven? Why dost thou wish thus to deceive?"

She was silent.—Again she spoke.

"My mother is alone, and I am here! she chides me for leaving her to shiver in the cold night. Grieve not, mother—soon will Bessie be with thee, to comfort thee."

The bird of night skimmed past—its dismal notes rang in her ears.

"Call not in agony, my mother!" she cried; "I come! I come, to ease thee of thy pain!"

She would have plunged into the stream, but an unwelcome hand from behind arrested her. She looked, and her eyes encountered those of her brother! Poor Bessie!

## VI.

It was morning. Bessie sat on a stone, watching several laughing children pursue their infantine sports.

"Laugh not!" she exclaimed, as their peals of merriment rang in her ears: "Laugh not! Where can you find aught joyful below yon beaming sun? Hark! hear you not the death-groan? How mournfully it is borne upon the breeze! Death stalks over the bright flowers—over the tall trees; and he only has cause to laugh, for he alone is triumphant! He frowns, and the loved ones are committed to the grave—he laughs, and the beautiful, and the precious, have disappeared. See this flower—how proudly it waves in the sunshine. Seems it not to bid defiance to all around? It wags its head as if in derision of the enemy. Alas! the poor fool! One tread from my foot will spoil all its pageantry. Yet will I not pluck it—let it bloom its little hour. 'Tis happy—and wherefore should I wish that happiness to cease? Flowers, when plucked, droop their heads in woful despondency—is it not then cruel to pluck them, and cut short the life of beauty?"

"Look here, Bessie!" cried one of the children; "see these pretty buttercups.—If you'll kiss Billy, Billy will make you a necklace of them."

"Kiss! yes, I kissed my mother last night in the churchyard—but her lips were so cold—cold! Ah, so will mine be when I join her, and then I shall not care."

She stooped down and kissed the child.

"Bessie, let Billy sit in your lap, Bessie—Billy will be good! Now Bessie, sing to Billy."

Bessie sang:—

"Ha! hear you not yon spirit's voice,  
Above, beneath, around,—  
Crying aloud—'Wherefore rejoice,  
When sorrow doth abound?"

Fools! does the captive hug his chain?  
Does he his dungeon bless?  
Will he not of his doom complain?  
Laughs he in his distress?

Does he depart from thence with tears?  
Is liberty his scorn?  
Does he delight to spend his years  
In mansion so forlorn?

O no! and what are all of ye  
But prisoners of woe?  
Curse not the friend that makes you free—  
Curse him not as your foe!

Laugh not because ye live so long—  
Weep not because ye die—  
But when death bursts these fetters strong,  
Mount joyous to the sky!"

She ceased; and for a moment seemed buried in abstraction.

"Ay!" she exclaimed, "we are all enchained—but wherefore?  
Because we know it not! Noble souls at last assert their own supremacy, and shake the thralldom off!"

She arose from her seat, and hastened down the village. No one was there to mark her steps, and she struck unheeded into the wood.

From that day none has heard of poor Bessie. The peasants returning from their labour, often fancy that they hear the melodious tones of her voice stealing through the woods: and some say that on clear moonlight nights she may be seen sitting on her mother's grave. But these are fancies!

Search thy heart, O reader, and thou wilt become a wiser man!

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Much is often conveyed by signs and emblems. Can none search here for a hidden meaning? Yes: but each one will interpret after his own whim, and peculiar manner of thinking, wholly regardless of the poor author's intentions. Well, *n'importe!*

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## EPIGRAMS FROM THE ITALIAN.

### COLUMBUS.

THOU gav'st a world to the Iberian throne;  
And closed thy weary days in worthless chains;  
And by another's name that clime is known;  
Is this the prize that heaven-born genius gains?—*Bertola.*

### TORQUATO TASSO.

Two states of Italy waged mortal strife  
For thee when dead,—each claim'd thee for his own;  
A poor and houseless pilgrim during life,  
They left thee then to pine in want alone.—*Bertola.*

## CATO.

To Cato dying some one kindly said,  
 "Cæsar is merciful, thou'st nought to dread ;"  
 Cato replied, "Roman should less desire  
 Cæsar's forgiveness, than his deadliest ire."—*Alamanni.*

## SCIPIO.

Carthage by thee was conquer'd, Rome set free  
 From her most fatal and long cherish'd hate ;  
 Then for the service thou hadst done the state,  
 She turn'd and hail'd thee as an enemy.—*Bertola.*

## MUZIO SCEVOLA.

So great the anguish was of Muzio's soul,  
 That when his right hand burn'd he felt no pain ;  
 The Tuscan king witness'd his self-control,  
 And sigh'd to see the left hand still remain.—*Alamanni.*

## JEALOUSY.

Oh, Cupid, fairest of the deities,  
 Say, why has Nature form'd thee without eyes ?  
 "I had them once," quickly responded he,  
 "And gave them to my daughter *Jealousy*."—*Bertola.*

## KNOWLEDGE.

If knowledge does to thee impart,  
 Nor wealth, nor worldly power,  
 It teaches thee that noblest art,  
 With sweet content to lift thy heart,  
 And scorn the priceless dower.—*Bertola.*

## THE ADVANTAGE.

Deaf from thy cradle, deaf thou dost remain,  
 But do not now lament thy cruel lot,  
 What thou regret'st as loss is now thy gain,  
 Lico is singing, and thou hearest not.—*Bertola.*

## EPITAPH ON THE TOMB OF A MISER, BY LOREDANO.

A wretched miser sleeps beneath this stone,  
 Who wept when death had claim'd him for his own,  
 Not for the joys of life for ever lost,  
 But for the money that his tomb would cost.

E. E. E.



## CHAUCER MODERNIZED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

SIR,—I believe there is no one thing so likely to bring about a healthy tone in modern criticism, as that of introducing the author and critic into the field together, *i. e.* in active juxtaposition. The passive condition of the former, in his book, lying upon the anatomical table, has always placed him in a comparatively helpless state of dumb endurance—so that the operator has stood, with knife in hand, to work his will upon him, or has ascended the unanswerable pulpit to lecture him in any terms that came uppermost. But when an opportunity is given to the “subject” of resuming, for a time, his vitality, and of sitting up on his table, it will generally be found that the lecturer must descend from his high place, and, at least, (when not utterly put to shame, as would often be the case,) admit the existence of certain extenuating circumstances, tending to neutralize a few of the errors and imperfections he had so satisfactorily discovered. Where this meeting of author and critic, face to face, was of a hostile nature, the victory would be most likely to be awarded to the man who best understood his subject—and not, as now, “by virtue of his office,” to the one who cavilled and cut up, accused, garbled, and denounced, without a word of opposition. Where the meeting was friendly, as in the present instance, the degrees of truth and error, which both parties were anxious to ascertain, would become more readily apparent. The method of giving fair play, or of hearing both sides, might generate, for a time, abundant squabbles in literature, but the good effect would speedily be found to counterbalance and reward the endurance of this temporary vexation by a thousand fold. With the anticipation of a “reply” from the author hanging over his head, a critic would become more careful in his study, more even-handed in his discoveries, more guarded in his assertions, and far less presumptuous in adopting that fashion, now universal, of the deliberate assumption, by the critic, of the most unqualified superiority over any author, or authors, it may be his choice or chance to anatomize.

The critic of “CHAUCER MODERNIZED,” in the last number of *The Monthly Magazine*, is manifestly a true lover and great reader of Chaucer in the original. His jealousy of his favourite poet is most commendable; and it would give a nobler prospect to literature, if every critic came to his task with the same previous study, care, zeal, and elaborate examination. His own previous labours are also well known to me, and have always been admired. Still, as he says to us, perfection is not to be expected; and there really *may* be such a thing as a critic going a little too fast, and a little too far.

In the course of the remarks about to be submitted to your readers, may I frankly request you, Mr. Editor, to believe that, should any mode of expression appear abrupt or reproachful, it results from no want of the respect and courtesy to which your very able critic is justly entitled, but rather from the want of time to come at him “roundly.” Besides, I prefer, on the whole, to shoot straight; and

am sure that he himself would much rather I did this, than make use of the Hibernian gun of curvilinear "shape malign."

Let us take his animadversions in the order in which they stand.

In the first place, the critic alludes to some weekly periodical having said that this volume was the first attempt of its kind—"that of assimilating, without materially altering, the text of Chaucer to the circumstances of time, and to the capacity of the general reader." Our critic says, "This is not the fact: as we are proud to say that it was *our* privilege to introduce the first to the public eye, through the medium of a by-gone number, some *eighteen months* ago, a specimen of Chaucer upon the principles of the writers engaged in the volume under our notice."

Now, that this gentleman may be proud "to say" this, is both creditable and credible, because, no doubt, he believes what he states; but he has no real *cause* for any pride of that particular kind. In *The Round Table*, Vol. I., written by Mr. Hazlitt and Mr. Leigh Hunt, there are two articles on Chaucer, in which this very principle is advocated, and various specimens are given by Mr. Leigh Hunt. And this was published some *four and twenty years* ago. The same principle is advocated, and some specimens given, in Vol. IX. of *The Retrospective Review*, published seventeen years ago. I only mention this to show that "we are all liable to mistakes," and that our friend is disposed to be at times more vigorous than accurate—or to go a little too fast, and a little too far. Those who make sweeping assertions, ought, at least, to have a sweeping knowledge and long memories. He also admits that he was not aware that Mr. Wordsworth had modernized "The Prioress's Tale" (published some twenty years ago); and it does not appear that he was aware, when he modernized "The Squire's Tale," two or three years since, that Mr. Leigh Hunt had given a version of it (though not in our present close readings of that tale) in *The Liberal*, published in 1823. Specimens of close readings were, however, given by the same gentleman in *The London Journal*, as well as *The Round Table*. "We call the public attention," says the critic, "merely as an act of justice to ourselves." Very good; for that same reason, I correct his statement. "And leave it to them," proceeds he, "if they please, to give our attempts a part in their work of comparison—or, at least, a share in the good intentions that have prompted the contributors to this volume." The latter will surely be refused by no one who properly values Chaucer; and, as for comparison—not invidiously with the present volume, but with the original—a word or two shall be offered in furtherance of his desire. No one can better bear the test, so far as fidelity to his author is concerned, which is the main portion of the compact, though not all that is required. Metre, rhythm, modern ears, modern language, are to be considered. It is in these latter requisitions that the specimens of the critic are open to animadversion; and the same oversights will be found to pervade his critical strictures.

From the sharp eye with which the critic seeks for every single word in the modernized version, which is not to be found in the original—pounces upon it—and hangs it up to public odium by the aid of *Italic* letters—it would appear that he either misunderstands the very nature

of a modernized version, or objects to it altogether, except in his own case. He complains that throughout the volume "too little attention has been paid to preserving the ancient construction of the verse, and the antique, but not unpleasing or uncouth, phraseology." This preservation has been adopted in various degrees by all the writers, according to their feelings as to how far it would be palatable, or even readable, by a modern public. But to preserve it entire, as the critic seems to wish, would be to give up the attempt, and to reprint the original, with some little aids of modern spelling, and marking of accents. This is what the critic does, in quoting his own "improved" text against us. He uses words with the obsolete accent—such as *voy-âge* for *voyage*, *ar-môir* for *armour*, *complain-ings* for *complainings*, &c.; he leaves an obsolete word just as he finds it, such as *slaw* for *slain*, *tway* for *two*; and as to modern quantities, in metre and rhythm, he does not seem to care a jot about the matter, in sundry of his corrections from the text. This is not to modernize, but to leave the difficulty as it stands. A true lover of Chaucer may well wish this plan to be adopted, but unfortunately it has been found not to answer at all. Mr. Cowden Clarke tried it in the best way. He deserved every success, and found very little indeed. Hence the present attempt.

It is possible that one might please the critic of the *MONTHLY MAGAZINE*, by a version of Chaucer in a rough sort of blank verse; in which case *all* the original words might be retained, or adequately translated, without any interpolation of single words, and only retaining the obsolete accents when necessary to the measure. But what an "only!"—It is to be feared that nobody but our present critic would read half a dozen pages of it. Besides, as Chaucer always wrote in rhyme, it would not be at all like Chaucer. In short, if done at all, it must be in rhyme—and this renders the task, unavoidably, a choice of evils, or no general truth can be obtained.

The general truth of a modernized version of Chaucer is the retaining as many of his own words as are compatible with the changes that have occurred in our language. When any of those are altered, they should be translations as close as possible. When this cannot be literally done, it should be done in the spirit. When any words are interpolated, they should also be in his spirit, and only adopted from the necessities of a resemblance of another kind, *viz.* his metre and rhythm. The particular truth of a modernized version demands that as many as possible of the single lines and couplets of the original as have become established favourites in the world, should be retained—even at the cost of some liberties with the less valuable lines which precede or follow them. This is the necessary evil. Yet the critic picks out one or two words from a particular couplet, as offensive interpolation, not perceiving (for I will not suppose him so unhand-some as to perceive, and pervert the intention) that all the remainder of the couplet is retained by the aid of that necessary evil. Moreover, that the spirit and character of the author is sought to be retained in those interpolated words. Thus, he objects to my saying that the Knight (in the Prologue) "*was sage*." Does not the whole account given of him tend to prove that he was sage? The modernized couplet is—



"For he was late return'd; and he was sage  
And cared for nought but his good pilgrimage."

Which the critic would correct in this awkward way,—

"And he was lately come from his voy-âge  
And *went him* (!) for to make his pilgrimage."

Yet in this proposed correction, the critic modernizes five words of the original, and interpolates one of his own.

He objects to my interpolating "pilgrim coil," (though it certainly was a pilgrim coil, or rout,) not remarking that it was done in order to preserve all the rest of the couplet, which introduces the Cook. He demurs to my saying that the Miller's voice was "deep of tones," which was introduced for the very same reason; moreover, this interpolation is founded upon the other characteristics of the original. I take it to be a physiological fact, that no sturdy fellow who could "break any door," or "heave up the bar of it," by running at it with his head, could have any other voice but a bass voice. From the great love of Chaucer which this critic evinces, I cannot but think he will be pleased to see that these interpolations have not been made carelessly, nor without great consideration; and that nearly every thing to which he objects, has already cost a world of trouble and objection to the parties concerned, and was only adopted after trying in vain at a better fulfilment of all the conditions required of a readable modern version.

The well-known line about the Physician, cost many an effort to retain.

"His study was but little on the Bible."

The rhyme to this in Chaucer was "diges-tible," which was inadmissible, as it was important to give this characteristic trait in a readable couplet. I think the difficulty has been got over in a masterly way; and I may say this, for it is not my doing. This work has been a "work of love" among us all, and each has assisted the other. The passage in question was rendered by Mr. Leigh Hunt, to whom I sent it, after numerous unsatisfactory efforts. The critic evades the difficulty altogether, by quoting the original,—

"Of his di-ét me-surable was he  
For it was of no *great* superfluity,  
But of great nourishing and di-ges-tible," &c.

Does this seem readable to the modern general reader? I think not at all; besides, the critic has added to the impracticability, by interpolating the word "great" in the second line, which is not in the original.

The plan upon which the critic would have had us proceed differs, as it would appear, in various points, from the one adopted. According to his plan, many obsolete words should have been retained, with notes, and obsolete quantities should have been generally retained by the help of accents. This was precisely what Mr. Cowden Clarke did—and in vain. It was the object of this work to employ very few accents, and give as few notes as possible. He quotes certain passages containing obsolete words, either to show that we should have retained them, or else that we have misunderstood them. In the latter

respect, he sometimes assumes dogmatically that we are wrong, as in the words *pris*, *reckless*, &c. Now, *pris* is also written *prise*, in one of the best black letter editions, which is Speght, 1598—that is, the Knight “had a sovereign price;” but as this would have made him a “mercenary,” and there was some doubt as to the rendering, I gave him the benefit of this doubt, and translated it “prize.” The critic chooses to read “reckless,” and to translate it as “undisciplined.” The Harleian MS. 7334 reads “cloisterless,” which I take to be the meaning of the passage—or, that it was idle to imagine that a monk, when out of his cloister, should be like a fish out of water. In that sense the passage was rendered. The other objections are trivial, and might be easily answered if they were worth the space. But I have to thank the critic for his emendation of my reading of “tapiser,” in which he is certainly correct. The objection, however, to my using the word “stave,” instead of “staff,” is unhandsome, because the word which rhymes to it in Chaucer is *yaf*, and this he must have seen (I suppose) could not be retained, while it is perfectly translated by the word “gave.” He also wishes to use the word “patient” as *pa-ti-ent*, an obsolete quantity which modern readers will not endure. His correction of the word “tabard,” is a mistake, as the sense of the passage plainly proves. Tabard means a “short frock,” in this place: it also means a herald’s short coat, and this was the sign of the Tabard Inn. The extremely indecent allusion in the last line, which describes the Pardoner, (and which the critic has made worse by a note,) I shall pass over. The reading substituted is quite near enough to the sense of the original, and means the same thing.

As the critic leaves the version of Mr. Wordsworth without much comment, I shall move on to the objections that follow. Nothing particular being said of Mr. Powell’s version of the Legends, and not much of Mr. Wordsworth’s version of the extract from “Troilus and Cressida,” we will come at once to his strictures on Mr. Leigh Hunt, which are somewhat personal, somewhat complimentary, very critical, and sufficiently presumptuous.

“Mr. Hunt,” says the critic, “has adopted our pronunciation of the name of Cambuscan throughout his version of the ‘Squire’s Tale.’” Really, gentlemen who will write in this pompous way ought to have read, at least, to the extent of their sweeping claim. He alludes to his publication of a few months ago. Mr. Leigh Hunt adopted this reading of the name in *The Liberal*, some eighteen years since; he even wrote it as two words—“Cambus Khan.” He altered it in our present volume, because he saw reason to doubt if he was quite justified in assuming such a reading.

Here is the critic’s version of the first couplet of the tale—

“At Sarra dwelt a Tartar prince, *who had*  
Like to a wolf Muscovie worried.”

Surely it would have been more readable to have written—

“At Sarra dwelt a Tartar prince, and he,  
Like to a wolf, had worried Muscovie.”

But, as the critic has in our case expressed such a horror of inter-

polation, where does he obtain the words marked in Italics? Here is the original,—

“ At Sarra, in the lond of Tartarie,  
Ther dwelt a king that werried Russie.”—*Chaucer.*

And here is Mr. Leigh Hunt's version,—

“ At Sarra, in the land of Tartarie,  
There dwelt a king, and with the Russ warr'd he.”

The black letter edition of 1598, and several others, read “warred,” instead of “worried.” Whatever may be the correct reading of this word, it is pretty clear whose modern version is the most correct in all the other words, to say nothing of the versification. And this I conceive to be the case throughout. Besides the frequent awkwardness and uncouth halting of the verse of Mr. Leigh Hunt's rival—our severe “hawk-eye” actually commits the crime of abundant interpolations himself! I have no wish to enter into the examination, unless *he* wishes it. But he must surely know what I could find in his versions, by comparing them with the original. Even while I write, my eye, casually glancing over these two modern versions of the “Squire's Tale,” is attracted by the following;—

“ *By the soft season and green leafing won,  
Brimful of gladsome and of grateful song,  
As they the shelter saw from winter's wrong,  
Nor feared more his sword so keen and cold.*”—*Critic.*

Not one of the words in Italics occurs in Chaucer. Mr. Leigh Hunt's rendering of this passage is as close as possible to the original, scarcely four words being changed, except in the spelling. Truly, our critic ought not to have made himself so favourable a judge in his own case.

Like all other well-known authors, Mr. Leigh Hunt is admired by some, and not admired by others. But after a man has stood his ground before the world for some thirty years, and become one of the veterans of literature, one would have thought that he might claim more respect than has been shown him by the present critic. The remarks concerning him are unhandsome; and if the critic be a young man, they deserve a stronger expression. The common critical pomposity of tone in calling him before “our tribunal”—the Holy Office of literature—is absurd. Why, Mr. Leigh Hunt is the father of half the critics of the time. I will leave this part of the examination with one more specimen. Let the following quotations be closely observed:—

“ Chaucer says, with great beauty,” (says our critic)—

“ ‘ Ruddy and broad the sun look'd from the skies,  
As he is wont when morning mists arise;’

“ which Mr. Hunt thus philosophizes away”—

‘ The vapour, breathing upward from the road,  
Maketh the sun to *seem* ruddy and broad.’

“ Chaucer loved not to analyze *how* nature performed her operations, but to observe them, and transfer them to his paper in colours bright and vivid as her own.”



Indeed! All this reads very plausibly; and no doubt many will agree with it, until they hear the truth of the case. Would it be believed that the truth of the above passage is precisely the converse of the critic's statement? It is absolutely the fact, that the first couplet is *not* Chaucer's. Chaucer does not "say with great beauty" any such thing. The quotation is from the critic's own version!—

"Ruddy and broad the sun *look'd from the skies,*  
*As he is wont when morning mists arise.*"

Every one of those words marked in Italics belong to the critic solely—not one of them being in Chaucer! Here is the original,—

"The vapour which that fro the erthe glode,  
Maketh the sonne to *seem* rody and brode."—Chaucer.

It is sufficiently plain that Mr. Leigh Hunt's version is close to the original, while that of the critic runs wild with license. And what becomes of the critic's "philosophizing away," as to Chaucer not loving to do the very thing which in this case he *has* done? Never was there a more perfect instance of a critic having line enough, and employing it to his own strangulation. It admits of no appeal—no evasion—no extenuating circumstances. The couplet last quoted is Chaucer's, *verbatim*, according to the black letter copies of 1561—1598; the edition of Lewis; according to Tyrwhitt, to Singer's edition; to Cowden Clarke, &c. And so much for "our tribunal."

The remarks on Miss E. B. Barrett's version of "Queen Annelida and False Arcite," are characteristic of our friend's deficiency in a knowledge of the construction of Chaucer's versification. He says the execution is "very eccentric"—the meaning of which I take to be this;—that the critic has never discovered the mode in which Chaucer occasionally varies his harmonies, by introducing rhymes in the body of his lines, as well as at the end, and grafting upon the ten-syllable verse, a stanza of a totally different class. This is most strikingly the case in the present poem; and the lady in question was expressly solicited to translate this very poem, because few beside herself possess the lyrical art in that high degree which it requires.

That the critic has a good understanding of the words of Chaucer, is continually evident. It is equally evident that he has not a good ear. The "emendations" he makes on Z. A. Z. in the "Rime of Sire Thopas," set all musical quantities, for the beauty of which the original is so especially remarkable in this poem, at utter defiance.

"In Chaucer thus, more closely imitated," says the critic;—

"He pricketh through a forest fair—  
Many a wild beast is there,  
Yea, both buck and hare."

This is not Chaucer closely imitated, but the original mutilated. If the original words be all given, and no more, then they should not be so far modernized as to lose the old quantities, otherwise the verse becomes unreadable. Of this there are several very perfect specimens in what our critic chooses to call "close imitations." Let the reader refer back to them in the January Number of the *Monthly*,

and judge for himself. The principal thing in the "Rime of Sire Thopas," is the beauty of its melody. Chaucer wrote with a great knowledge of the principles of his art, and not like a poet of the Sandwich Islands.

To the few remarks on Mr. Bell's version of "Mars and Venus," I shall merely reply, that the critic might have shown a better appreciation of the great difficulties to be contended with in that poem, and of the manner in which they have been surmounted. If, here and there, a license is taken by Mr. Bell, from necessity, the difficulty is certainly not mastered by the critic, but evaded, when he retains such phraseology as complain-ings, and look-ings. Anybody could "do us" a Chaucer in this way, without the least trouble.

The examination of Mr. Powell's version of the "Flower and the Leaf" is performed in a most unique manner, by the critic quoting exclusively from his own. He says "occasionally illustrating the tale by extracts from Mr. Powell's version; and, with the characteristic conceitedness of the reviewer, now and then a closer attempt of our own." But so very much does the critic prefer his own to that of the gentleman he is reviewing, that, "on second thoughts," he determines, after a few lines, to omit Mr. Powell's version altogether, and the "now and then" of his own forms the entire body of his selections. I do not, at present, feel myself called upon to examine the latter. I shall only observe, that the great fault he finds with the elegance of Mr. Powell's translation, is one from which his own is quite free. Nevertheless I greatly admire the fidelity of the critic's version.

The ridiculous "mistake" which the critic thinks he discovers in the inversion of the line—

"There goeth a bridge and under that a brook,"

is certainly a hypercriticism, since it is quite as common to say that a bridge goes over a river, as a river goes under a bridge—nay, is it not common to say "a bridge *runs* over it?" The inversion at which he carps, was adopted in order to preserve as much of the original couplet as possible; and this is not to be effected by the critic's easy mode (in his "emendations") of leaving the word *brigge* to rhyme with *Cantebrigge*.

In the three passages which follow, the errors on my part are undoubted. I have not a word to say in their defence; and can only excuse myself by declaring them involuntary oversights, all of which shall be carefully corrected in a future edition, with many thanks to the critic for pointing them out. Had he confined his strictures to such absolute and unqualified misinterpretations as these, (instead of confusing the reader's judgment with hypercriticisms,) our obligations to him would have been considerable; for in a work of this kind some errors must undoubtedly exist, which can only be corrected in process of time. I could mention some others which have escaped the critic, as they did me—to my very great regret.

In the objection which the critic makes to the modernizing of "The Reve's Tale," because the plot of it is coarse, he totally overlooks the real value of the original. That which is admirable in "The Reve's Tale,"

is not its plot—(for this is a mere broad farce, and moreover a borrowed one from the old Italian novelists)—but the humorous portraiture of character. All the persons are original, strongly defined, and highly coloured portraits. It would be a hard case to lose such a character as Disdainful Simkin, the miller, when a very trifling reduction of the plain-speaking of the plot, and the omission of a few lines, leaves the story as unobjectionable as any introduction to a pantomime. The critic's fidgetty attempt to tell the story in prose, is laughable, from his entire failure in rendering it at all intelligible, and the manifest "scrape" into which he has got himself.

The attempt to tell in a few words of prose, such a story as "The Franklin's Tale," is a heresy against poetry. An English gentleman once said to a foreigner, "What! have you never read 'Othello'?" "I really have not." "Well, then, I'll tell it you. There was an extremely brave man of colour who commanded the Venetian armies. He had seen a great deal of actual service, and was accustomed to relate anecdotes of his life, which very much interested the daughter of one of the Venetian senators. She soon came not to mind the colour of his face, because she felt a pity for his narrow escapes." He went on, and gravely finished the story. "Well," said the foreigner, "I really cannot see any of those divine revelations of genius, for which your Shakspeare is so famous! The story is nevertheless a good one, and the black savage very like his race." "Black savage!" exclaimed the gentleman of letters—"why, Othello was one of the noblest of beings!" "You don't say so!" said the foreigner; "no developments of this kind appear in the horrid story you have told me."

Allow me to thank you, Mr. Editor, for the handsome manner in which you have thrown open the pages of the *Monthly Magazine* to this reply. The even-handed justice of granting such an opportunity for defence, is one which can never be too highly estimated, in the present condition of our literature, where criticism still exists as an arbitrary disease. Knowing the great pains taken by the contributors of this volume of "Chaucer Modernized" to render it worthy of the original; and knowing also, from my position as Editor of the work, the particular difficulties which each had to encounter; I thought it incumbent on me to offer some reply to an elaborate article, proceeding from an able and well-read student of Chaucer. The slight opinions and adverse fancies of those who have only awoke to the discovery that there was anything interesting in Chaucer, the moment they found he had a chance of being rendered available to the public, are not worthy of notice; but a lover and student, like the present critic, ought not to be suffered to create an undue prejudice against all our labours, by the "monsterring" of nothings and necessary evils. To his real corrections, there is no objection, but all thanks are returned for them. If the critic should think that my remarks have been influenced by the vexation of any of the contributors, he will be quite mistaken. The only animadversion made by one of them on his single and collective attack was that, "It was Heraud slaughtering the innocents." He thought the deed had been done by the editorial sword. So far from any animosity or unkind feeling existing towards the critic, I can assure him that there are few individuals to whom we



should sooner apply than himself, to join our labours in the Second Division of the work at a future time.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir, with great sympathy in your many labours,  
Your obliged

R. H. HORNE.

[NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—We right willingly give insertion to Mr. Horne's communication, and have no doubt that our critic will reply to it in our next.—J. A. H.]

## OUR MONTHLY CRYPT.

"As good almost to kill a man, as kill a good book: who kills a man, kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book kills Reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burthen to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."—MILTON.

### POETRY.\*

POETRY is eternal. Never has there been a time recorded when it was not; never can there be a time when it shall cease to exist. Poets are indeed the prophets of the race; and God never leaves himself without a witness among the sons of men. But prophets are always disregarded in their own age and in their father's house. Albeit, no celestial fire will descend from on high to consume the earthly and carnal sacrifices of the priests of Belial, yet by men are they more honoured than those who worship at the true shrine.

Sound hath more power over mankind than sense; and thoughtless pleasures or vapouring flourishes, that tickle the ear and fool the understanding, are often preferred to delineations which thrill the affections, or sentiments which elevate the soul. So that there be brightness, we care not from whence the brightness is derived, and frequently find we have been dazzling our eyes with what, had we more nearly investigated, we should have avoided as bestial and disgusting.

"'Tis such a light as putrefaction breeds,  
In flyblown flesh whereon the maggot feeds,—  
Shines in the dark, but, ushered into day,  
The stench remains, the lustre dies away!"

Thus has poetry become too ornate and artificial. Trusting little in the natural graces of nature, the would-be poets of the present day try all expedients which may appear able to heighten them; unconscious that they are only mauling the perfect, and degrading the beautiful. Pompous diction may be proper to the bard who celebrates in lofty numbers heroic deeds; but it certainly is a great poetical sin to consider such a diction to be one of the essential constituents of the sublime. Says Dryden, "Nothing is

\* 1. *Fugitive Verses.* By JOANNA BAILLIE, Author of "Dramas on the Passions," &c. London: Moxon, 1840.

2. *The Saga of Frithiof; a Legend.* Translated from the Swedish of Esaias Tegner, Bishop of Wexio. By OXON BAKER. London: Saunders and Otley, 1841.

3. *Imagination. A Poem, in Two Parts. With other Poems.* By LOUISA FRANCIS POULTER. London: Saunders and Otley, 1840.

4. *The Morea. Second Edition.* To which is added, *Meditations of other Days.* By ALEXANDER BAILLIE COCHRANE. London: Saunders and Otley, 1841.

5. *Sketches and Legends among the Mountains of North Wales, in Verse.* By JANET W. WILKINSON. London: Boone, 1840.

truly sublime that is not just and proper. If the ancients had judged by the same measures which a common reader takes, they had concluded Statius to have written higher than Virgil: for

*Quæ super imposito moles geminata Colosso,*  
carries a more thundering kind of sound than

*Tityre tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi:*

yet Virgil had all the majesty of a lawful prince, and Statius only the blustering of a tyrant." This writer subsequently declares his regret for perpetrating certain verses in his own *Maximin and Almanzor*, which he confesses "cry vengeance upon me for their extravagance, and which I heartily wish were in the fire." Dwarfish thoughts dressed in gigantic words, abundant repetition, looseness of expression, and gross hyperboles, he slashes without mercy. But in our own day, a greater evil than the one he thus condemns has darkened the poetical hemisphere—greater, because less obvious to the sight. Outrageous pomposity is sure at some time to be exposed and assigned to the tombs of the caliphs. Not so the more heinous fault to which we allude. The critic often praises, and the public ever swallows with avidity, poems in which every word is soft and delicate, and every phrase set to music. Prettiness is all that is now required of the popular rhymester and playwright. Their works are too generally words, words, only words, which do indeed sound smoothly, and sweetly, and silverly, but are excitive neither of thought nor of emotion. Much fragrance they emit, without doubt: yet their fragrance is not that of green fields, but the aromatic odour of the drawing-room. Poets of this class will make the bluff seaman speak in as polished a style as the most finished courtier; and all their characters facsimiles of each other. Whether a good thought lies behind the mass of words or not, is wholly indifferent; for if there is one, we lose it, and if there is not one, we are unconscious of the *hiatus*. To preserve this uniform melodious flow of words, energy is sacrificed, and beauty caricatured—all that is noble levelled with the merely pleasing, and all that is delicate refined to an airy nothing.

These remarks have we been induced to make, by finding Joanna Baillie, in her preface to the volume of *Fugitive Verses* she has lately published, entering an apology for the homeliness of her subjects, and the simplicity of her diction. Little disposed should we be to quarrel with her effusions on that account; especially after Wordsworth has lived, and written, and been appreciated. We demur, however, when she proceeds to attribute this increase of "imaginative" and "sentimental" poetry to a "natural progress of the art." No natural progress is it, but an artificial declension. We love simple incidents to be simply told; and words and thoughts to be truly matched with each other. Then we have poetry—otherwise only gaudiness. Imagination may shed her most splendid beams over homeliest descriptions and homeliest phrases. When, indeed, there arises a poet who can, by the fervour of his strong imaginings, carry scenes of real life into a wholly ideal world, which shall heighten all that is lovely, and transform all defects into beauties—who can describe a sunset in such glowing terms that we shall fancy we see it sparkle on the page, then we shall allow art to have made a natural progress by means of imagination. While, however, Wordsworth and Thomson stand unrivalled, we shall continue to think with Southey, that, "*the three excellencies of poetry are, simplicity of language, simplicity of subject, and simplicity of invention.*"

So much for exordium—let us now grapple a little more closely with our present business. Sitting in a comfortable arm-chair, with the volumes, whose titles figure at the bottom of this article, placed on a table by our side, we commence our not ungrateful task. An hour's poetic loitering has been to us erewhile, one of our chief luxuries; and we have no doubt but that, among the aspirants who are now waiting to bask in the sunshine of

our approving smile, we shall find some worthy to participate in the benignant beams.

Joanna Baillie is one of the few poetesses whom we admire. Her *Dramas on the Passions* have already been sufficiently commended and sufficiently dispraised; to canvass their merits would be foreign to our present design. At present, we have only to do with her *Fugitive Poems*. The early pieces, which stand first in the arrangement of her book, are taken, she states, from a small volume published by her anonymously some years ago, but not noticed by the public, or circulated to any considerable degree; and in the course of after years, the feelings of her own mind, it appears, in a good measure coincided in the neglect it had met with. However, on finding that some of the pieces from this little neglected book had found their way into collections of extracts made by those whose approbation implied some portion of real merit, her little volume returned again to her thoughts, and disposed her—on a warmly expressed opinion in its favour by a poet who, from his own refined genius, classical elegance, and high estimation with the public, is well qualified to judge—no longer to resist a latent inclination to add some of its verses to her present collection.

The public will be very far from regretting her determination. The two opening poems, which respectively describe a winter's and a summer's day in Scotland, are exceedingly beautiful in their graphic simplicity. Take the following extracts from the former:—

“ The night comes on apace :  
 Chill blows the blast and drives the snow in wreaths ;  
 Now every creature looks around for shelter,  
 And, whether man or beast, all move alike  
 Towards their homes, and happy they who have  
 A house to screen them from the piercing cold !  
 Lo ! o'er the frost a reverend form advances !  
 His hair white as the snow on which he treads,  
 His forehead mark'd with many a care-worn furrow ;  
 Whose feeble body bending o'er a staff,  
 Shows still that once it was the seat of strength,  
 Though now it shakes like some old ruin'd tower.  
 Clothed indeed, but not disgraced with rags,  
 He still maintains that decent dignity  
 Which well becomes those who have served their country !  
 With tottering step he gains the cottage door ;  
 The wife within, who hears his hollow cough,  
 And pattering of his stick upon the threshold,  
 Sends out her little boy to see who's there.  
 The child looks up to mark the stranger's face,  
 And, seeing it enlighten'd with a smile,  
 Holds out his tiny hand to lead him in.  
 Round from her work the mother turns her head,  
 And views them, not ill-pleased.  
 The stranger whines not with a piteous tale,  
 But only asks a little to relieve  
 A poor old soldier's wants.  
 The gentle matron brings the ready chair,  
 And bids him sit to rest his weary limbs,  
 And warm himself before her blazing fire.  
 The children, full of curiosity,  
 Flock round, and with their fingers in their mouths  
 Stand staring at him ; while the stranger, pleased,  
 Takes up the youngest archin on his knee.  
 Proud of its seat, it wags its little feet,



And prates, and laughs, and plays with his white locks.  
 But soon a change comes o'er the soldier's face;  
 His thoughtful mind is turn'd on other days,  
 When his own boys were wont to play around him  
 Who now lie distant from their native land,  
 In honourable but untimely graves.  
 He feels how helpless and forlorn he is,  
 And big round tears course down his wither'd cheeks.  
 His toilsome daily labour at an end,  
 In comes the wearied master of the house,  
 And marks with satisfaction his old guest  
 In the chief seat, with all the children round him.  
 His honest heart is fill'd with manly kindness;  
 He bids him stay and share the homely meal,  
 And take with them his quarters for the night.  
 The aged wanderer thankfully accepts,  
 And by the simple hospitable board,  
 Forgets the bygone hardships of the day."

Of nature, as of beauty, may it be said, that unadorned it is adorned the most. The above description is very sweet; but it would evidently lose all its charm, if its language were but slightly elevated. There is another poem, "A Child to his Sick Grandfather," which breathes the same spirit. We, however, pass on to poems of a later date. Reader, is not the following poetization of a humble theme delightful?

#### "THE KITTEN.

Wanton droll, whose harmless play  
 Beguiles the rustic's closing day,  
 When, drawn the evening fire about,  
 Sit aged crone and thoughtless lout,  
 And child upon his three-foot stool,  
 Waiting till his supper cool,  
 And maid whose cheek outblows the rose,  
 As bright the blazing faggot glows,  
 Who, bending to the friendly light,  
 Plies her task with busy sleight;  
 Come show thy tricks and sportive graces,  
 Thus circled round with merry faces.  
 Backward coil'd, and crouching low,  
 With glaring eyeballs watch thy foe,  
 The housewife's spindle whirling round,  
 Or thread, or straw that on the ground  
 Its shadow throws, by urchin sly,  
 Held out to lure thy roving eye;  
 Then, stealing onward, fiercely spring  
 Upon the tempting faithless thing!  
 Now, wheeling round with bootless skill,  
 Thy bo-peep tail provokes thee still,  
 As still beyond thy curving side  
 Its jetty tip is seen to glide;  
 Till, from thy centre starting far,  
 Thou sidelong veerest with rump in air  
 Erected stiff, and gait awry,  
 Like madam in her tantrums high;  
 Though ne'er a madam of them all,  
 Whose sweeping kirtle sweeps the hall,  
 More varied trick and whim displays  
 To catch the admiring stranger's gaze.

Doth power in measured verses dwell,  
 All thy vagaries wild to tell?  
 Ah, no! the start, the jet, the bound,  
 The giddy scamper round and round,  
 With leap, and toss, and high curvet,  
 And many a whirling somerset,  
 (Permitted by the modern Muse  
 Expression technical to use,)
 These mock the deftest rhymester's skill,  
 But poor in art, though great in will.

The featest tumbler, stage bedight,  
 To thee is but a clumsy wight,  
 Who every limb and sinew strains  
 To do what costs thee little pains;  
 For which, I trow, the gaping crowd  
 Requite him oft with plaudits loud.

But, stopp'd the while thy wanton play,  
 Applauses too thy pains repay:  
 For then, beneath some urchin's hand,  
 With modest pride, thou takest thy stand,  
 While many a stroke of kindness glides  
 Along thy back and tabby sides.  
 Dilated swells thy glossy fur,  
 And loudly crows thy easy purr,  
 As, tuning well the equal sound,  
 Thy clutching feet be-pat the ground,  
 And all their harmless claws disclose,  
 Like prickles of an early rose,  
 While softly from thy whisker'd cheek  
 Thy half-closed eyes peer, mild and meek.

But not alone by cottage fire  
 Do rustics rude thy feats admire,  
 The learned sage, whose thoughts explore  
 The widest range of human lore,  
 Or with unfetter'd fancy fly  
 Through airy heights of poesy,  
 Pausing smiles with alter'd air  
 To see thee climb his elbow chair,  
 Or struggling on the mat below,  
 Hold warfare with his slipper'd toe.  
 The widow'd dame, or lonely maid,  
 Who in the still but cheerless shade  
 Of home unsocial spends her age,  
 And rarely turns a letter'd page,  
 Upon her hearth for thee lets fall  
 The rounded cork or paper ball,  
 Nor chides thee on thy wicked watch  
 The ends of ravell'd skein to catch,  
 But lets thee have thy wayward will,  
 Perplexing oft her better skill.

Even he whose mind of gloomy bent,  
 In lonely tower or prison pent,  
 Reviews the coil of former days,  
 And loathes the world and all its ways;  
 What time the lamp's unsteady gleam,  
 Hath roused him from his moody dream,  
 Feels, as thou gambolest round his seat,  
 His heart of pride less fiercely beat,

And smiles, a link in thee to find,  
 That joins it still to human kind.  
 Whence hast thou, then, thou witless puss!  
 The magic power to charm us thus?  
 Is it that in thy glaring eye  
 And rapid movements we descry—  
 While we at ease, secure from ill,  
 The chimney corner snugly fill—  
 A lion darting at his prey,  
 A tiger at his ruthless play?  
 Or is it that in thee we trace,  
 With all thy varied wanton grace,  
 An emblem, view'd with kindred eye,  
 Of tricky, restless infancy?  
 Ah! many a lightly sportive child,  
 Who hath like thee our wits beguiled,  
 To dull and sober manhood grown,  
 With strange recoil our hearts disown.  
 And so, poor kit! must thou endure,  
 When thou becom'st a cat demure,  
 Full many a cuff and angry word,  
 Chased roughly from the tempting board;  
 But yet, for that thou hast, I ween,  
 So oft our favour'd playmate been,  
 Soft be thy change, that thou shalt prove  
 When time hath spoil'd thee of our love.  
 Still be thou deemed by housewife fat,  
 A comely, careful, mousing Cat,  
 Whose dish is, for the public good,  
 Replenish'd oft with savoury food;  
 Nor, when thy span of life is past,  
 Be thou to pond or dunghill cast,  
 But, gently borne on goodman's spade,  
 Beneath the decent sod be laid;  
 And children show, with glistening eyes,  
 The place where poor old pussy lies."

This kind of poetry is what we should be inclined to class as being eminently *suggestive*. It deals with details, not with results. Rarely does it analyze the feelings, or dive into the mysteries of philosophy; yet it heaps together the materials that enable others to do so. Nor let this be thought mean praise. What does the historian—the naturalist—or the chemist, do more?

The gems of Joanna Baillie's book are the ballads: we only regret they should one and all be too long for quotation. Will the talented poetess permit us to express a hope that the following fear may prove premature?

"Few are the measured rhymes I now may write;  
 These are, perhaps, the last I shall indite."

The *Saga of Frithiof* is one of the boldest and the best of the Swedish poems. Tegner has already received justice at our hands,\* and to his former translator has been awarded the due meed of praise. We could have wished that Mr. Baker, the renderer of the *Saga*, had been possessed of his reverend

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\* See the January Number for 1839, wherein is a review of the Rev. Mr. Latham's Translation of Bishop Tegner's "*Axel*;" and in the course of which "*Frithiof's Saga*" is incidentally noticed.



predecessor's metrical abilities ; but of this we will not too rigidly complain. Nay, we are not quite sure whether the occasional ruggedness of the versification is not an additional charm ; according as it does with the ruggedness of the subject, manners, and characters of the poem.

The *Saga* is divided into twenty-four cantos, of which none are very long, while some are excessively short. Each change of scene is accompanied by a change of canto ; and each canto has a metre of its own. As this singular production is but little known to the general reader ; and as Sweden is usually considered, by the South of Europe, to be the land of poverty and rudeness ; it may afford some gratification to our readers, if we enter into a short investigation of the best poem of its best poet.

In the first canto we find Frithiof and Ingeborg personally portrayed, and their love for each other exhibited. Its first verse is characteristic :—

“ There flourished in the northern earth,  
Two plants, while Hilding watch'd their birth,  
The north had ne'er such beauty seen ;—  
They flourished on her hills of green.”

Of these two plants, one shot forth like the proud, noble, stately oak,

“ And lance-like tower'd above the earth ;”

while the other

————— “ flourish'd like a rose  
When scarce are flown dull winter's snows ;  
But spring, from whence her hues are streaming,  
Lies in that rosebud fondly dreaming.

But storms around the earth shall lower ;  
That oak shall wrestle with their power ;  
Spring's suns its rays o'er heaven shall spread ;  
Then opes that rose her lips of red.

Thus long with joy their summers roll'd ;  
That oak was Frithiof the bold ;  
But the dale's rose that flourish'd there—  
The name was Ingeborg the fair.”\*

The rest of the canto recounts the youthful years of each, and the love-sick vagaries of Frithiof. He is represented in one part as comparing his love to several of the goddesses in the Northern Mythology, and celebrating her superiority. The following has a kind of rough elegance about it :—

“ Iduna's breast is fair, I ween,  
That heaves beneath her silk of green ;  
I know a silk that oft discloses  
Two elves of light with budding roses.”

The next canto introduces to our notice the aged king Belge, and Frithiof's father, the no less aged yeoman Thorsten Vikingsson.

“ They stood like two old temples  
Amongst the frowning rocks,  
Whose walls are half in ruin laid  
By time's destroying shocks ;  
But runes upon the battlements  
Of by-gone wisdom tell,  
And memories of mighty deeds  
Within the arches dwell.”

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\* *Ingeborg*, according to Mr. Baker, signifies the castle of youth ; and *Frithiof*, destroyer of the peace.

King Belge declares that he has now grown too old to live,\* and states he has sent for his sons, and their comrade Frithiof, that they may receive his last instructions. Into the royal hall they accordingly come—the gloomy Helge—the maiden-like Halfdan, and the towering Frithiof. The old king utters a great many very pithy maxims for the guidance of his sons. Of these, all are so pointed, that, had we room, we should transfer them to our pages. Belge having concluded, Thorsten declares his determination to die with his king, and in his turn utters words of wisdom. Says he—

“Obey the king—for it is right  
That *one* should sway alone;  
The hazy night has many eyes,  
But day has only one.  
Wisdom supreme is honoured  
By the greatest in the land;  
The sword not only needs an edge,  
But hilt to fit the hand.  
All strength proceedeth from the gods;  
But, Frithiof, e'en thou'lt find,  
Brute-strength avails not much, unless  
With common-sense combined.  
The Bear has twelve men's strength, yet he  
Is slain by one man's hand;  
The shield was given to guard the arm,  
The law to guard the land.”

Belge and Thorsten are dead. Helge and Halfdan succeed to the old king's dominions—Frithiof to the yeoman's estates. Nor were these estates contemptible, for the poet declares that there was seldom a richer heir than he.

“But of these riches Frithiof possest,  
Three things were treasured far beyond the rest.”

These were, his lightning-sword, which had been forged in the East by the dwarfs, and tempered in Hell-fire,—his arm-ring, that had been forged by Vanlund the Vulcan of the North, and which, after having been stolen by the pirate Sote, was recovered in a desperate adventure by Thorsten and Belge,—and his bark Ellida, given by a sea-god as a reward for a deed of charity.

But all these give their owner no pleasure—he sighs for Ingeborg. He will ask her of her brothers in marriage. He comes to where the kings sit in council on Belge's cairn. Thus he addresses them:—

“Ye kings, I love your sister fair;  
To ask her hand I now am here;  
King Belge wish'd, long e'er he died,  
That Ingeborg should be my bride.  
We grew 'neath Hilding's fostering care,  
As trees whose crowns embrace in air;  
But Freja, with benignant hands,  
Hath join'd the two with golden bands.  
My father was not earl or king,  
Yet do the bards his praises sing;  
And high-arch'd cairns where rune-stones lie  
Recount our deeds and ancestry!

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\* The reader scarcely needs to be informed of the custom which prevailed among the Northern tribes, of putting themselves to death when they were afflicted with the infirmities of age.

With ease I'd vanquish many a land  
 But ne'er will leave my native strand ;  
 I will defend her ; watching o'er  
 The king's domain—the peasant's door !  
 We stand on Belge's cairn—he hears  
 Each word, and listens to my prayers ;  
 Bethink yourselves, tho' seal'd in death,  
 He hears us in the mound beneath.'

With scorn King Helge rose and said :—  
 ' Our sister shall no peasant wed !  
 The mightiest monarchs in the land  
 May strive, not thou, to win her hand !  
 Go, boast thy courage round the earth ;  
 But seek not to deceive the north ;  
 For ne'er, as yet, was Odin's blood  
 The prize of him of boasting mood.

No need for thee to guard my land,  
 I guard it with my own good hand ;  
 A place thou still may'st have from me—  
 A servant's place I'll give to thee !'  
 ' Thy slave, forsooth !' now Frithiof said,—  
 ' No slave am I to kingly head ;  
 My sword from out my scabbard fly—  
 Fly quick—for yonder wretch shall die !'

His falchion glitter'd in the sun,  
 And blood-red runes burn'd fierce thereon ;  
 ' Thou sword !' said Frithiof, ' tried by me,  
 Thou art of old nobility !

And wert thou not that cairn upon,  
 I'd cleave thee, hateful monarch, down ;  
 Yet will I thy proud spirit learn  
 To flee when blood-red runes do burn.'

He clove in twain, as thus he spoke,  
 The king's gold shield upon the oak ;  
 One half against the cairn rebounded,  
 And deep beneath the stroke resounded.

' Well done, my sword ; lie now, and dream  
 Of greater deeds ; thy runic beam  
 Conceal, and let thy flames grow pale ;  
 Now homeward o'er the waves we sail !' "

This is courtship with a vengeance !

The aged and good King Ring is seated among his bards and warriors. His queen is dead, and he would fain have another. King Belge's daughter is the maid of his choice. Warriors are accordingly sent to demand her of her brothers ; who, dreading the power of the suitor, are willing to comply. The omens, however, prove unpropitious—Helge fearfully is obliged to give Ring his " No,"—

" But Halfdan spurn'd the messengers with jeer :  
 ' Farewell with feasting—welcome to remorse !  
 Tell old King Greybeard he'll be welcome here ;  
 I'll help that good old fellow on his horse.'

With wrath the messengers drew swift away ;  
 And to the king is his dishonour borne ;  
 But he, though wroth, is drily heard to say :

' That old King Greybeard will avenge his scorn !' "



War is declared. Helge, fearful of the result, places Ingeborg in the god Balder's shrine for safety. All aid must be obtained; and the brethren deign to apply to Frithiof, through the medium of Hilding, his foster-father. Frithiof is playing at chess with Bjorn.

"Then Hilding said—'From Belge's son I bear  
To thee their wishes and their humble prayer;  
The news, I fear, nought but distress disclose,  
And all our succour must in thee repose!'"

But Frithiof said—'Now, Bjorn, have a care,  
Thy king's in peril and unsafe I fear;  
Yet with a pawn the danger he defies,  
For humble pawns were made for sacrifice!'"

And thus they continue, for almost the whole canto, to answer at cross purposes, with a readiness that does no discredit to Bishop Tegner's wit. At last, Frithiof, in plain words, gives a flat denial.

The next canto (VII.) is naively headed "*Frithiof's Bliss*," and consists wholly of a passionate address made by him to Ingeborg. The eighth canto is a dialogue between the lovers. A jury had been assembled to decide on Ingeborg's fate. Dark as a thunder-cloud sat Helge on the judgment-seat. Frithiof proffers his aid in the forthcoming war, if they will give him Ingeborg. The warriors with one voice assented—"Let Ingeborg be his!" But the gloomy Helge asked of the hero, whether he had not profaned the temple by secretly seeing Ingeborg at the shrine? The warriors all shouted, "Say no! say no!" Frithiof, however, scorned to tell a lie, although there were none to challenge it. He owned the charge. All recoiled from the profaner of the temple. Banishment or death was the penalty enjoined by law; but Helge commutes the hero's punishment. He is to collect the tribute which the fierce Earl Angantyr had withheld. Failing in this desperate expedition, he was to be declared a coward and banished. After vainly endeavouring to induce Ingeborg to fly with him, he departs.

He is on the sea. Helge, by enchantments, raises fierce storms. Frithiof, however, safely arrives at Angantyr's hall of fir. One of the earl's warriors encounters the adventurer. Frithiof shivers his opponent's weapon. They then agree to wrestle. Frithiof relinquishes his sword, and the fray begins afresh.

"But Frithiof threw at last his sturdy foe,  
And held him down, and loudly thunder'd so:  
'Had I my sword, thou Berserk grim,' he said,  
'Right through thy heart I'd thrust its biting blade!'"

Then Atle proudly thus did make reply:  
'Go fetch thy sword, here quiet will I lie;  
We all in turn must go to Valhall's hall,—  
I, perhaps, to-day—to-morrow thou mayest fall.'

Then Frithiof wrathful wish'd to end the fray—  
He fetch'd his sword—yet quite still Atle lay:  
This touch'd his bosom, and his blow restrain'd;  
He raised his foe, who thus unmoved remain'd."

This consciousness on the part of the defeated warrior, that by being overcome he had legitimately forfeited his life, and had no right to prevent his victor from taking it, is a sketch of chivalrous feeling, for which we might vainly look in the heroes of Homer or Virgil.

The earl willingly pays the tribute; and in the spring Frithiof returns—returns to a desolate home. Helge and Ring had been at war. Helge defeated, in his flight had burned Frithiof's property. As the price of peace the brethren yielded their sister. The hero is enraged, and seeks Helge in

the temple. The king proves himself a coward ; but in the midst of the dispute the temple is set on fire and burned to the ground. Having thus once more committed sacrilege, the hero is obliged to fly his country ; and becomes a rover. Tired of this life, and languishing for a sight of Ingeborg, he at last proceeds disguised to King Ring's court. He enters the hall as a beggar, leaning on a staff. The courtiers make fun of him ; but on his throwing one of them to the ground with fury, they are silent.\* Ring inquires of the stranger his name ; who tells, in reply, a very pretty tale concerning his being named Contrition, and the heir of Famine ; but at last is betrayed by his shaggy skin falling off, and discovering, instead of an old man, a sturdy youth.

“ Then o'er the cheeks of Ing'borg  
The changing colours flow,  
Like rosy north lights painting  
The fields o'erspread with snow—  
Like two sweet water-lilies  
That feel the storm's unrest,  
And swing upon the billows,  
So heaved her beauteous breast.”

The old king hospitably entertains the stranger, and the queen fills him a beaker of wine.

“ The brimming horn she proffer'd  
The guest, with eyes cast down,  
But her white hand was trembling,  
The wine was spilt thereon ;  
As evening's purple blushes  
O'er lilies on the strand,  
Those rosy drops were burning  
Upon her snow-white hand !”

Long does the stranger stay at the court of Ring. He and the old king are out hunting. Ring, dismounting, would slumber awhile.

“ ‘ Here thou may'st not slumber, monarch,  
Here the dews are wont to fall ;  
Up ! and I will quickly take thee  
Back unto thy royal hall !’  
‘ Sleep, like other gods, approaches  
When we least believe it near,’  
Said the king : ‘ will not the stranger  
Grant his host to slumber here ?’  
Frithiof doff'd his costly mantle,  
Spread it down beneath a tree ;  
And the king, with calm and pleasure,  
Laid his head upon his knee,—  
Slumber'd deeply as the hero  
After warring on the sea—  
Calmly as the child doth slumber  
On its watching mother's knee.  
As he sleeps, a bird is singing,  
Black as coal, from off a bough :  
‘ Hasten, Frithiof ! slay the monarch—  
Finish thus your struggles now !’

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\* This is much like one of the incidents in Homer's “Odyssey.”

Take his queen—she once did love thee—  
And she dearly loves thee still!  
Not a human eye beholds thee,  
And the dark deep grave is still!\*

Frithiof lists;—a bird is singing,  
White as snow, from off a tree:  
'If no human eye beholds thee,  
Odin's eye is fixed on thee!

Dastard, wouldst thou kill in slumber,  
And the aged monarch slay?  
Well I know no fame will greet thee  
From such vile inglorious fray.'

Thus the wondrous birds were singing.  
But his falchion Frithiof took,  
And he hurl'd it swiftly from him  
In the forest's darkest nook.

Coal-black bird flies off to Narshand;  
But on wings like gold that shone,  
Did the white one fly, while singing  
Like a harp-note, towards the sun."

The monarch awakes and declares his sleep to have been pleasant.

" 'Yet where is thy falchion, stranger?—  
Lightning's brother, where is he?  
Who hath sever'd sword and hero,  
Ye that ne'er should sever'd be?'

'Much it boots not,' Frithiof answer'd,  
'Many a sword I still may find;  
Sharply bite the tongues of falchion  
With the words that are unkind.

In the steel dwell evil spirits—  
Spirits sent from Niffel-hem,  
Oft they seek to slay a sleeper—  
Hoary locks may anger them.' "

To this Ring replies, that he has not been sleeping; that he had merely tried the faith of the stranger. "Thou art Frithiof," says he; "long I knew thee. All to me has been revealed;" and then indignantly asks his guest—

" 'Wherefore crept you to my dwelling  
As a lonely beggar drest?  
If 'twas not to basely rob me—  
Rob my queen from off my breast?  
Honour, Frithiof, ne'er is sitting  
Nameless on the bench and low,  
Like the sun, her shield's resplendent,  
Fair and open is her brow!'

The old king, however, wishes their ancient feud to be given up; and promises to Frithiof, Ingeborg and the reversion of the kingdom. Melancholy is the hero's answer; the stain of sacrilege is on his name, and until that is removed he cannot be at peace. He will depart. He enters the king's hall to say farewell. He speaks:—

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\* We have often reason to regret Mr. Baker's carelessness in his rhymes.



"The impatient billows lash my winged steed,  
The sea-horse longs again to leave the strand;  
He chides my lingering—I must swiftly speed  
From long-loved friend, and from my native land!"

But King Ring is dying. With straw-death, he declares, his breath shall not be quenched, and he dies as the northern warrior loved to die. From this point the poem hurries to a conclusion. King Ring's infant son is made king in his father's stead, with Frithiof as protector; who, to atone for his sacrilege, builds a new temple on the site of that which had been so lucklessly burnt down.

In the last canto the temple again raises its head to the heavens, and Frithiof is declared reconciled to the gods. The chief priest speechifies for all the world like a Christian parson; and very reverently referring to Christ, prophesies that the time shall come when Christianity shall supplant their idol-worship. All this is in very bad taste; but Tegner, being a bishop, could not resist tacking a string of morals at the end of his poem. Then follows an account of Helge's death, and his brother Halfdan's succession, with whom the benevolent priest enjoins Frithiof to be at peace. Thus the poem concludes:—

"Now Halfdan o'er the threshold enter'd in,  
Uncertainty and fear were in his mien,  
Silently gazing on the man he fear'd,  
While doubtful feelings on his brow appear'd.  
Then Frithiof placed his sword, so true and bright,  
Hater of armour, 'gainst the altar's site,  
And friendly spake: 'In strife that rends the land,  
He is the noblest who first gives the hand!'   
Then Halfdan blush'd, his gauntlets off he drew,  
And with a gripe, long, lasting, firm, and true,  
Two hands long sever'd now were join'd again,  
Firm and fast rooted as the mountain chain!  
Then did the priest annul each curse and ban  
O'er Vargi Veum,\* o'er the exiled man.  
And as he spoke, slow enter'd Ingeborg,  
In bridal dress with ermines cover'd o'er,  
And in her train twelve beauteous maids appear,  
As stars attend the moon in heaven's bright sphere;  
While tears into her beauteous eyes did start,  
She melting fell unto her brother's heart,  
Who with soft tears his friendly soul confess'd,  
And laid his sister upon Frithiof's breast;  
Then o'er the altar did she sweetly bend  
Her snow-white hand unto her childhood's friend."

Much beauty is there in many parts of Frithiof's Saga; and giving, as it does, a most vivid picture of the manners and habits of the Northmen, it is as interesting to the antiquarian as to the poet. Both Mr. Latham and Mr. Baker are worthy of much praise for their endeavours to introduce Bishop Tegner in fitting guise to the English public. May they be rewarded!

Dangerous is it for an aspirant to touch on any subject which has been hallowed by a previous poet, and associated with his name. To this objection, Miss Poulter's poem of *Imagination* is obnoxious; in reading it, you can scarcely fail to draw comparisons which it was not prudent in her to provoke.

\* Vargi Veum, a person that had committed sacrilege and been exiled from his country. The person so denounced was execrated by all.

Had she chosen another subject, she might have received much praise ; but it would be vain for her to seek to excel Akenside.

Yet has she merit, and a great deal. In the mechanical appliances of her art she is a proficient—her versification is perfect to a fault. Many of her sentiments are prettily turned ; and some of her descriptions pleasing. The following is one of the best, if not it :—

" When childhood mingles in this scene of strife,  
And sips the fragrance of untasted life,  
The simple pleasures o'er its paths are shed,  
Fresh as the dew that bathes the primrose bed ;  
They seek from thee no bright delusive hue,  
To whet desire, for every charm is new !  
The power to act with freedom from constraint,  
Is all of bliss the sportive mind can paint.  
See from his sheltering roof the infant boy  
Rush with delight to snatch the promised joy,  
Allow'd for once to stray where'er he please,  
And live one day of liberty and ease.  
His frugal basket to his girdle hung,  
His little rod across his shoulder flung,  
With eager taste he starts at dawn of day,  
Yet every trifle lures him from his way ;  
An opening rose—a gaudy butterfly,  
Turn his light steps, and fix his wandering eye ;  
He plucks ripe berries blushing on the hedge,  
And pungent cresses from the watery sedge.  
At length he gains the bank and seeks to fill,  
His little ship and prove his infant skill ;  
He marks the fish approach in long array,—  
Then stamps the ground to see them glide away.  
But lo ! one speckled wanderer lurks behind,  
'Mid the tall reeds that skirt the stream confined.  
It comes—it bites—he finds himself possess'd  
Of one small trout less wary than the rest :  
With trembling hand he grasps the finny spoil,  
The rich reward of one long day of toil !  
For some short moments yet he keeps his seat  
Close to the brook, and laves his weary feet ;  
Wide from his face his auburn locks he throws,  
That playful airs may fan his little brows ;  
Then upwards springs, and hums a blithesome lay,  
To cheat fatigue and charm his lengthen'd way.  
Hark ! while across the verdant lawn he skips,  
The half-told tale is mutter'd from his lips ;  
With bounding heart he shows his spotted prize,  
And marks exulting the well-feign'd surprise.  
A second moment sees him lock'd in sleep,  
And placid slumbers o'er his senses creep ;  
He dreams he rests along some river's side,  
Where giant trout beneath clear waters glide."

Of this, the only fault is, that it reads as if written with an effort.

Mr. COCHRANE's *Morea* has already been favourably noticed in the pages of this Magazine. He is a poet who, we believe, will produce greater things than any he has yet published. It is interesting to mark how all the rising stars of genius are recording their admiration of Shelley. We extract the following from Mr. Cochrane's volume, with feelings of no ordinary satisfaction :—

## "ON PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

Oh, name it not—think it not! breathe it not now,  
 For cold is his aspect and damp is his brow;  
 For his errors we'll weep—for his sins shed a tear—  
 But we'll wrong not his name now he's stretch'd on his bier!

He burst on the senses, he flash'd on the sight,  
 Like the meteor which burns in the darkness of night;  
 Let the tear-drop fall soft on the turf which ye tread;  
 Whom ye honour'd when living, oh, wrong not when dead!

His life had not twilight—in splendour he set,  
 And the beams of his glory are lingering yet;  
 In death, 'midst the cold blast of envy he stood,  
 Ye know he was great, oh! believe he was good!"

To this edition Mr. Cochrane has added a very elegant poem, intituled,  
 "Meditations of other Days." The opening is very pleasing:—

"Is it not sweet, when music's melting tone  
 Falls in soft cadence on the heart alone,  
 To hear in twilight hour the echoes float  
 Of pensive lyre, or clarion's wilder note?  
 Now with the whispering breeze the murmurs die,  
 Now gush again in fuller melody;  
 Each wooded hill the trembling chords prolong,  
 Whose bubbling waters mingle with the song;  
 Fainter and fainter on the anxious ear  
 Swells the rich strain—though distant, ever clear,  
 Till, lightly floating up the winding glen,  
 Where jutting rocks reflect them back again,  
 The echoes die; as when low winds inspire  
 The softest cadence of Æolian lyre,  
 Scarce breathe the lips—scarce dare the bosom swell,—  
 For now the lowest sigh would break the spell,—  
 Still hopes the heart to catch one murmur more;  
 Yet hopes in vain—the sounds have died before."

There are many faults in this passage, yet, taken as a whole, it raises an exquisite idea.

The lines we quote next are honourable to Mr. Cochrane as a man. We have neglected the poor, and they feel and remonstrate, and perhaps, ere long, will avenge. If, however, aristocracy would but become paternal, democracy would soon be disarmed: poor men have hearts, and rights!

"Go! go! despise ye proud ones; think that you  
 Alone are virtuous, principled and true!  
 Because the poor man knows not history's page,  
 Think you he wants the spirit of his age?  
 Proud fool! I tell you, in the poor man's breast,  
 The truest, noblest feelings often rest!  
 He has not drunk from education's well,  
 Or learnt how CÆSAR fought—how CÆSAR fell;  
 He does not know LYCURGUS gave his laws,  
 Or reads the chronicle of Sparta's wars;  
 But yet he bears within a flow of soul,  
 Which, if occasion call, will burst control.  
 Born in a hut, and pillow'd on a sod,  
 That man will die for country, king, and God!"



Of Miss WILKINSON'S *Sketches and Legends amid North Wales*, all we can say is, that they are pure expressions of pure feelings. We think, in every case, such early publication to be imprudent. Poets, of all others, should avoid being hasty in rushing before the public, for the prize is seldom to be snatched by a youngling arm.

*Literary Leaves; or, Prose and Verse, chiefly written in India.* By DAVID LESTER RICHARDSON. In two volumes, second edition. London: W. H. Allen and Co., Leadenhall Street. 1840.

"*Cælum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt*," is the most appropriate motto which could have been prefixed to these two beautiful volumes. The author is an Englishman, but has been long in India, an exile from the land of his birth: but English feelings, English modes of thought—yes, even in despite of India's balmy breezes, English air and English scenery—constitute the charm of his writings. When we opened the book, we listened in breathless expectation to hear the tall palm trees rustling in the gale, and were prepared to lend all our ears to tales of the mystic Gunga as it rolls its romantic waters through the valleys and the forests of India—but in vain: no tiger burst from the tangled jungle, and the variegated snake did not play before our eyes. All was England; and save that the warmth of the Indian clime has now and then turned into glowing ecstasy the natural coldness of the English disposition, internal evidence would never have told us that the author had ever left his native land. Of the book itself we cannot to speak too highly: the criticisms, of which there are many, are more impartial than we remember ever to have seen; and there runs through these generally acid productions, a stream of love and charity which it is quite delightful to behold. Nor is the author at all monotonous in his subjects. Poets and philosophers, the successful and the unsuccessful, the known and the unknown, all come under his piercing eye, and all receive their just meed of praise or blame. In no work do we remember ever to have seen a comparison so fairly drawn as that between Byron and Wordsworth,—a subject often treated of before, but never, we think, with so little of prejudice, and so much of amiable feeling, as by Mr. Richardson. His *Literary Leaves*, as he calls them, are like some rich and fertilizing stream, flowing on in calm and slow dignity, never hurrying away in boiling eddy or dashing cataract: all its banks are calmness, and peace, and fertility, and the husbandman blesses it as it passes on in its quiet mission of good; or, to keep up the author's own metaphor, he is like the tree which has adorned the landscape with its bright foliage, and which, as the winter approaches, drops its leaves to fertilize the earth to which they owe their origin and support—so brightly, so sweetly, so gratefully do these *Literary Leaves* lie upon the surface of that society by which they were produced and fostered, and so well calculated do they seem to fertilize its soil.

Nor are Mr. Richardson's labours confined to criticism: he has entered, and with no slight success, on the domains of poetry; and his more severe pages are lightened by the little gem-like poems which he has interspersed with no niggardly hand. It is hard to select, where all is good; and so we will open the book at random, and take the first that presents itself to give as a specimen to our readers. Here we have one: it is a pathetic description of an English landscape, which still seems, amid the more gorgeous scenery of the East, to hold the chief place in the author's heart.

"The land ne'er smiled beneath a lovelier day,  
So rich is every light, so soft each shadow!  
How brightly beautiful this sun-lit meadow!  
How merrily the small rills o'er it stray,  
While fairy children on their sweet banks play!  
With songs of birds the perfumed groves are ringing—  
'Neath cottage eaves the village maids are singing,  
And blend their artless songs with laughter gay;—

A herdsman old in yonder shade reposes ;  
 And kine, knee deep in pasture, feed at pleasure ;—  
 Oh ! fairer far than Persia's fields of roses,  
 Is this calm scene, that memory long shall treasure ;  
 Elysian landscape ! ere life's vision closes,  
 May this worn heart here taste luxurious leisure."

Those, too, who love to brood over the many and strange anecdotes which the curiosities of literature afford, will find themselves gratified by the perusal of Mr. Richardson's delightful volumes. The story of Dr. Darwin's literary theft from Miss Anna Seward is one little known, and is told very beautifully. Of Mr. R.'s style we can scarcely speak too highly: light and free as his Indian breezes, it has yet great strength, and is at times peculiarly forcible. There is one article, on Jeremy Bentham's opinion of poetry, which is in many parts poetry itself, though written in plain prose. It is indeed a subject where,

" Si natura negat, facit indignatio versus :"

and it will be the highest praise to say that Mr. Richardson has made the best of so exquisite a theme. In conclusion, we would most heartily recommend the volumes before us, to those to whom love and charity in criticism, brightness and sunniness combined with deep feeling in poetry, beauty and airiness in style, and purity throughout, seem any recommendation to a book: and we are sure, that, if there be any love for such things in this country, the voice of the exile in India will have a ready response from his more fortunate countrymen in England.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

*A Lecture on Mental Improvement.* By WILLIAM FREDERICK BARLOW, M.R.C.S. London: Sherwood & Co., 1841.

An eloquent, though perhaps rather too rambling lecture, delivered at the Tunbridge Wells Society for the Cultivation of Literature and Science. The motto Mr. Barlow has adopted, serves very well to explain the objects and scope of his remarks:—"Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them: for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation."—LORD BACON.

There is much elegance of versification in *Recollections, &c.* Miscellaneous Poems, by JOHN JONAS JONSON; and some fine things both in GEORGE DARLEY'S *Ethelstan*, a Dramatic Chronicle in five Acts, and in Mr. DUNLOP'S *South Sea Islands*.

We see in these, further proofs of the revival of the dramatic form of composition. Were there but theatres, and those open, we should witness another Elizabethan age.

*Baronetage of the British Empire for 1841.* Mortimer.

*The Book of Mottos borne by the Nobility and Gentry, Public Companies, &c. &c.* London: Washbourne, 1841.

Two useful compilations, and neatly executed.

*Longbeard, Lord of London*, a Romance, in 3 vols. London: E. Bull, 1841.

This romance is laid in the reign of Richard I. The hero of it is William Fitz-Osbert, the hunchback of London, commonly called, from his long flowing beard, Longbeard, a famous demagogue, who, at the commencement of the story, is presented to us in connexion with the popular grievances of the time. He embraced the cause of the Saxon malcontents, and was opposed by Fitz Alwyne, the first mayor of London, a Norman, who was so much in favour with the richer burghers and with the monarch, that he continued in that office for twenty-four years, but was hated by the inferior orders. Longbeard was betrothed to Friedolinda, the daughter of Jordan the Saxon, a wealthy tanner, whose house was the resort of the disaffected.

The heroine is repeatedly insulted by Sir William Le Boutilier in the streets, for which at length the Norman receives punishment from the mob, but appeals against its justice to the mayor of London. Inquiries being instituted, and a quarrel ensuing, William Marichal, a blacksmith, was knocked down, trampled on, and disabled from attending to his business; and Longbeard convened a meeting at St. Paul's Cross, to consider and redress the popular wrongs. Longbeard, of course, is eloquent on the occasion—but the troops interfering, Marichal is killed, and the mob infuriated to the burning of the mayor's house. Longbeard is accordingly cited to appear before the Queen and the Earl of Moreton (afterwards King John), but the democrat nevertheless escapes punishment.

Meantime, Boutilier has contrived to carry off Friedolinda and her sister, but is pursued by Longbeard and the tanner to the castle of Willenden. They find the maidens already delivered through the agency of John o' the Dingle, a gleeman. In the conflict, Boutilier loses his life at the hands of a forester.

Longbeard now falls into suspicion by the Court, and is so persecuted as to be compelled to seek sanctuary, with his companions and his betrothed, in the church of Mary-le-Bow. Their enemies resolve to starve them into surrender, and the theme of the romance begins to grow in interest and power. The scene, with the idiot choir-boy and his music, with its marriage-rite, *minus* the priest, with its hopes and fears and sufferings, with its prolonged siege, ending in the firing of the sacred edifice, the capture of most of its inmates, and the escape of the hero and heroine, is exciting, stirring, and engrossing. The escape, in particular, is exceedingly well managed.

The style of this romance is very elegant—the verses which are introduced partake of the poetic spirit which might be expected from the genius of the writer. As a first endeavour in narrative fiction, it is free from most of the faults which usually attach to early compositions; and we think that Mr. Mackay, as a poet and romancist, will meet with every encouragement.

J. GREEN'S *Nursery Songs* are simple melodies, well adapted for the very young performers intended by the composer.

No. 3, of LANZA'S *Sunday Evening Recreations*, justifies the praises that we bestowed upon the previous parts.

We much wish that we had space to say all we think concerning the *Chapters on the Poets of Ancient Greece*, by HENRY ALFORD, M.A. Whitaker & Co. Truth and beauty are here identified, as they are in the nature of things. Thank heaven! there is good taste somewhere. Every sentence in this book is an essay, and every chapter a volume—of thought. Let it be read slowly and meditated on.

Parts 1, 2, and 3, of *Ireland, its Scenery, Character, &c.* by Mr. and Mrs. S. C. HALL, illustrated by distinguished artists, and published by How and Parsons, are such specimens of a new publication as make us desire to see the whole. This is, indeed, a very superior work, whether we consider it graphically, typographically, or cryptographically. We have here genuine humour and true reflection, with pictorial adornments, in the best taste of invention and style of engraving.

We have received *The Turkish Empire, Syria, The Holy Land, and Asia Minor, &c.* illustrated by W. H. Bartlett, Thomas Allan; with Descriptions, by JOHN CARNE, Esq. Fisher, Son, and Co. We find here a good life of Mehemet Ali, with five excellent engravings, in quarto, for two shillings. The same indefatigable publishers have also published, uniform in style and form, *The Rhine, Italy, and Greece*, illustrated with four capital engravings, by W. L. Leitch, Col. Cockburn, and Major Irton; with Descriptions, by the Rev. G. N. WRIGHT, for the same price.

The Rev. THOMAS SCOTT'S *Commentary on the Bible*, containing the Old and New Testaments, according to the authorized version, is also now pub-



lished by the same house, in embellished parts, with a highly finished engraving on steel. Part I. is a beautiful specimen of what is intended.

We can and need do no more than commend our readers to get a sight of FISHER'S *Historic Illustrations of the Bible*, after the old masters. The manner in which this work is produced is altogether attractive; the engravings are fine, correct, and spirited, and the letter-press appropriate. Such publications as these are, after all, the best commentaries on the Holy Scriptures.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of the *Confessions of Harry Lorrequer*, a book whose success with the public bears ample testimony to its merits. The humour of some of its descriptions is almost equal to Boz; but it lacks his richness of incident and characteristic eccentricity. We, however, are even now engaged upon an article on Boz and the other Comic Writers of the present era, in which Harry Lorrequer shall receive due appreciation.

We have likewise to acknowledge the receipt of Part X. of HEATH'S *Waverley Gallery*, containing three exquisite engravings, and of Part II. of LEIGH HUNT'S *Seer*, which, like all Mr. Moxon's publications, does him great honour.

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### THE UNACTED DRAMA.

THE dramas contained in our Crypt above, by Messrs. Darley and Dunlop, fine as both of them are, were not intended by their authors for the stage. We, having faith in the public mind, and seeing that the taste for dramatic exhibition is immensely on the increase, think it very absurd that any thing written in the dramatic form should be so written as to preclude its performance. This is not the way to break down the villanous monopoly that now renders the theatres insolent; and sacrifices the Poet to the Speculator. We have pursued another course, and so have our friends and coadjutors, Mr. Horne and Mr. Stephens.

The latter gentleman has just published a new first-rate, spirit-stirring, and soul-deep tragedy—*The Hungarian Daughter* \*—being the poetical enlargement of a drama, which, under the name of THE PATRIOT, has recently been rejected from the Haymarket. For any demerits? O, no! but from want of room!! Mr. Macready—(hear it, Melpomene! and avenge!)—had expressed himself “*emphatically*,” both to the author, and (*according to his own account*) to Mr. Webster, in favour of the tragedy—and then to the manager was left the dirty work, which, after such delay as is usual in such cases, he was only over happy to do—or get done; for the manager is too great a person to write to a poet, though a gentleman of the first water, with his own hand. Read, all whom it may concern, the letter of the underling!

“I am desired, by Mr. Webster, to inform you *that there is really not the slightest chance of an opening for your tragedy*, his arrangements for his future campaign being entirely completed. I am thus prompt, that you may be afforded facility in presenting it to another theatre, where it might be an acquisition.”

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\* *The Hungarian Daughter*, a Dramatic Poem, by George Stephens, author of the Tragedies of “*The Vampire*,” “*Montezuma*,” “*The Queen of Hungary*,” and (*unpublished*) “*The Patriot*,” &c. &c. London: C. Mitchell, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, 1841. We shall review this production at large in our next number.

This is cool. Did our Poet take the advice contained in the second of these two precious sentences? No! he tells us, "that I have not offered the returned manuscript to the one other house at which it may be produced, without the manager being liable to be 'informed against,' and that consequently my Tragedy of '*The Patriot*' lies upon my hands, is owing to my entertaining a strong persuasion, from that acquired species of wisdom which has passed into an adage, that it would be to no purpose." Mr. Stephens is right—his tragedy would have been rejected at Covent Garden Theatre—but he would have met with no humbug there! Mr. Mathews is incapable of the chicanery which disgraces Mr. Macready's intercourse between authors and managers—that is, Mr. Mathews *manages* the matter more neatly—but the result is the same.

Other men, besides Mr. Stephens, have toiled for *twenty* years at dramatic composition, and found "no chance of an opening." The fact is, managers do not pretend to judge of the merit of plays. Their rule is to reject *all*—an acceptance is a miracle. The plays that are produced are written to order. The writer undertakes them as a paid task. He writes against time and tide. Hence the frequent failures, and the manifested inferiority of the acted to the unacted modern drama.

Mr. Stephens writes:—

"I am sensible, that I am too deeply interested to be allowed to draw any conclusion from my long individual sad experience; but I may perhaps be permitted to signify my indignant sense of the unworthy treatment of my dramatic contemporaries; men, whom I respect as my superiors in our sublime art, and who, owing to the absurd and unjust privileges of the Patent Theatres, are precluded from producing, at the minor houses, dramas of the highest character (some of which have appeared in print, and many more probably remain in manuscript) before a public, who may nevertheless sup lawfully every night upon debasing horrors, whose tendency is pernicious to the morals of the innocent and susceptible, and which are revolting to the taste of the more refined and superior classes of society. Were I to affirm, that in my opinion the unacted drama of this country, at the present day, is of higher order than that which finds its way unto the stage, such a declaration would be very likely ascribed to prejudice, but Mr. Serjeant Talfourd has most handsomely proclaimed the same truth; and from his competence, in every point of view, to set the question at rest, I should presume there can be no appeal.

στρεπταί μὲν τε φρένες ἐσθλῶν.

"How much longer then will the play-going or the play-loving people of London and its environs ignorantly submit to this most grievous privation? How much longer is a state of things so repugnant to the laws, customs, and liberties of the land, and so injurious to all parties, to be endured? How much longer is this incubus of a Patent Monopoly to be suffered to weigh upon the heart of genius, . . . a monopoly created in the very teeth of the act of 21 James I. chap. 3, sect. 4, and which moreover, in the forcible words of a well-timed and judicious publication, 'is only exercised to the destruction of the production it was meant to foster, and which is an outrage to common sense and justice so obvious, that if once fairly brought before the legislature it must be abolished?'

"A literary novice, in calculating the chances of getting his play performed, need not trouble himself to take into account the intrinsic merits of

the work, or even its aptitude for theatrical purposes. 'My dukedom to a beggarly denier,' but the five-act piece, composed under some literary *prestige* to order, be the same good, bad, or indifferent, would be brought out with the most lavish appointments and minute attention to stage effect, though it unfairly, I may say scandalously, jostled aside another Hamlet or Macbeth, supposing it were possible, under the existing embargo upon true dramatic genius, that such *chefs d'œuvre* could be written.

"That circumstances may now and then occur which rather seem to invalidate this statement, I am of course aware, but the exceptions are so far between, that I apprehend they must be brought about in order to establish the rule.

"Well then, excluded by a tripartite 'understanding but no tongue' from the two or one Patent Theatre which may happen to be open, what redress, what compensation, what hope, 'amidst all that shatters from his life its verdure,' (to use the phrase of Sir E. L. Bulwer,) is left to the injured dramatist? Again, to quote Mr. Tomlins's searching 'View of the English Drama,' 'Unlike other authors or artists, he has no market. He cannot go from publisher to publisher, or print for himself like the novelist; for unacted plays will not sell, and, indeed, if constructed to act, are not well adapted for mere reading.'

"It may be added, that their appreciation, considering the actual dense condition of the public taste in regard to the style and conduct of the drama, will be just in the inverse ratio of their merit with mere readers; which designation comprises, and, 'until people leave off raving about Shakespeare and the old dramatists, and *conscientiously study them*,' will continue to comprise, nine out of ten of the purchasers of a devoted play. This lamentable state of ignorance, pampered and rendered inveterate by the wretched food provided by the monopolists, might almost excuse the dramatist, not only for avoiding the sublime and more recondite beauties of his art, but what were even worse, for knowingly resorting to them in wrong places, or with detriment to coherency of character and unity of action. Nay more, it furnishes him with a strong temptation to prostitute his high calling; to trick and minister to the modern admiration of pinchbeck verse and claptrap; and to descend to the capacities and sympathies of the million, by composing in an adulterate species of drama, which corresponds with all they have been taught of late to admire, and which he is conscious in proportion to its flash and glitter will redound to his profit and reputation. Indeed, I am not sure whether it would not be politic in the genuine dramatist were he to lower his genius in part, and for awhile, to the 'empty noddles, the debased taste of the public,' with the view of becoming popular, and of afterwards turning his reputation to account by reclaiming his auditors or readers, and elevating them to his own level."

How long is this state of things to last? But it is of no earthly use to write and talk; something must be *done*; nay, *two* things must be accomplished. We must have a FREE STAGE and an AUTHOR'S THEATRE! Talk—write no more—but bend all energies to the attainment of these two objects!

An Association is already formed for both these purposes. Arrangements are now made that such parties as take an interest in it shall be secured the performance, within an ascertained period, of dramas composed by themselves or their friends. The Editor of this Magazine invites *all* the unacted dramatists of England, without exception, to correspond with him forthwith relative to this business.—Let their letters be addressed at once to 28, Burton-street, Tavistock-square. There should be no delay—as the earliest applicants will have the first chances.